TOP STORY: CLINTON'S HEALTH SNARE

October 4-17, 1993

# In THESE TIMES

the alternative newsmagazine

# ALTERED STATES



Leaving the past behind

FRED HALLIDAY, PAGE 14

Looking forward

KHALIL E. JAHSHAN, PAGE 16

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EDITORIAL

# POLAND RETURNS TO A SOCIALIST ROAD

When communism went down in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, socialism went down with it. In the system that called itself "real existing socialism," popular hatred of stifling conformity, bureaucratic rule and the suppression of all forms of civil society made it impossible to distinguish between the two traditions. This "death of socialism" was widely trumpeted in the West, and particularly here in the United States, where political leaders, the media and academic ideologues crowed over the collapse of communism as a victory of "free market" capitalism.

At the time, *In These Times* dissented from this view. We wrote that while communism—as defined by the Soviet experience—was dead, its demise might in the long run be "less a vindication of corporate capitalism than an unprecedented opening of possibility for democratic socialism."

***The new Polish government will be led by parties that have rescued the socialist content in communism.***

This view was, of course, ignored, as the architects of Poland's capitalist "shock therapy" were celebrated here and in Warsaw. But for Poles, it was one thing to reject the idea of socialism and quite another to experience the loss of security that full employment, subsidized housing, free medical care and stable prices had provided.

Now socialism is beginning to make a comeback—both in Poland, where social democratic parties organized by former Communists just won a majority of seats in the Polish parliament, and potentially in Russia, where President Yeltsin and the parliament are locked in mortal struggle over the nature of market reforms.

As we write, the immediate outcome in Russia remains unclear. But in Poland, the people have decisively rejected Jeffrey Sachs-style capitalist reforms and have given the two social democratic parties—the Democratic Left Alliance and the Peasant Party—301 of the 460 seats in parliament. As one supporter of the Left Alliance explained, "After four decades of the state's taking care of all the needs of its citizens, it is difficult to institute a policy where the new state completely ignores" social needs. Yet, fatally, that "is exactly what the capitalist parties did."

After four years of American-inspired "free market" policies, Polish unemployment has gone from nearly zero to 15.2 percent and poverty has grown dramatically. In the countryside, the high cost of credit and subsidized imports from the European Community have angered small farmers and merchants, who make up 40 percent of the electorate. These policies gave the left much of its impetus. So, too, did the government's bending to the will of the Catholic Church in passing severe anti-abortion legislation and in blurring the line between church and state. Indeed, the election was a smashing defeat for the church's hopes of regaining the position it held in pre-war Poland. The Fatherland Catholic Election Coalition failed to reach the threshold level of 8 percent. It will thus have no seats in the new parliament.

Yet, while both the Democratic Left Alliance and the Peasant Party are outgrowths of the old Communist Party, they do not represent a return to the old days. As Left Alliance leader Aleksander Kwasniewski explains, "the time of a central economy, a one-party system and limitations of freedom is over." Indeed, he says, "If someone in our party proposed a return to a central command economy, he would have to be expelled, not for being a Communist but for being an idiot."

Kwasniewski is a former minister of sports in the old Communist regime who does not entirely reject his roots. But, as he says, "only some roots are the same"—those that contain "leftist values like social justice."

In short, it appears that the new left that has emerged in Poland has successfully begun the process of separating socialist ideas and policies from Communism. True, the left's victory this time is as much due to the failure of Poland's American-inspired government as it is to the popularity of the principles Kwasniewski espouses. Nonetheless, democratic socialism will now have a chance to prove itself in Eastern Europe. ◀



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"...with liberty and justice for all"

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# LETTERS

## Stretch

In an otherwise enlightening analysis of the "middle class" (*ITT*, July 26) Nancy Folbre wrote, "The middle class is not, as Kevin Phillips would have us believe, a repository of civic virtue but is rather an amalgam of groups pursuing their own self-interest, often at the expense of others."

This may be a reasonably accurate generalization, but it displays a profoundly pessimistic bias that has long been characteristic of the left—a bias that must be discarded if progressive ideals are ever to gain widespread acceptance in this country.

The implication is that nearly all middle-class people are motivated largely by narrow, short-term economic self-interest and hardly at all by the desire to participate in the formation of a more just, better-functioning society that would benefit everyone in the long run. Ironically, this is exactly the caricature of "economic man" upon which capitalist economic theory is so flimsily based. Sadly, as capitalism has become more and more widely regarded as the inevitable end-state of history, more and more people seem to be conforming to this caricature.

Nevertheless, there are still plenty of middle-class people for whom greed has not yet become the primary motive, and there are plenty more who could be quickly turned around by a sufficiently well thought out, determined and optimistic progressive movement.

**Ralph Suter**
Chicago

## Identity vs. class

I'm confused. On one hand, Nancy Folbre (*ITT*, July 26) hammers the right for its "appeal to race and gender interest to broaden what might otherwise be a too-narrow class constituency." Yet Folbre deploys similar interests to narrow what might otherwise be a wide class constituency and to prove radical class-based politics all but impossible.

Folbre argues that massive transfers of the social surplus through taxation and public benefits have obscured the capitalist-worker relation, and the redistribution has grown so complex that it's hard to sort out who gains and who loses. Of course it's hard, but that's the sort of thing economists are trained to do, and popular economists should clarify.

At first glance, public budgets in the U.S. do less to obscure class relations than they do to reinforce them. Military Keynesianism promoted reaction at home and a marvelous hierarchy of nations abroad, and just crushed its enemy of over 40 years. Business and the wealthy are subsidized generously, and rich bondholders enjoy fat interest payments. While the elderly of most classes do reasonably well by Social Security and Medicare, the system is financed by a capital-sparing tax on working people. Our mean, intrusive welfare system only intensifies distinctions between the poor and everyone else, and it too is financed disproportionately by the middle class rather than the upper class.

Yes, old lefties were afflicted with a crude definition of class that blinded them to the politics of race and sex and to life outside the workplace. But old lefties hardly exist anymore.

SYLVIA — by Nicole Hollander






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Instead of arguing with the dead, let's figure out how race, sex and class relations form each other, and what that means for politics.

Is Folbre arguing that people live their lives as "older white men" or "young women of color"? Are we to replace economic essentialism with a demographic one? It's as if Folbre accepts the Limbaugh/Lead or Leave division of the world, only with the signs reversed.

Demography leads to odd politics. For example, several years ago Folbre told me that deindustrialization was largely a concern of relatively privileged white males—even though a third of manufacturing workers are women, a fifth are black or Latino, and the labor aristocracy is a fading memory. Reindustrialization, a strategy that could appeal to workers of all colors, across 60-70 percent of the income distribution, is to be junked on spurious demographic grounds.

And why should the Democrats "mind ... the soul of social democracy"? Social democrats, whatever their faults, and whatever their current debasement, ususally believe in independent unions and the politically organized working class—older white men and young women of color together. This is certainly not the case with the party of Ron Brown. But if this country is as split by race, age and gender (why not geography, too?) as Folbre thinks, and so overrun by Perotians, too, how could anyone mind the soul of social democracy?

**Doug Henwood**
editor, *Left Business Observer*
New York

***Nancy Folbre replies:*** *If what Ralph Suter means is that human behavior can't be reduced to selfish motives, I certainly agree. Otherwise, the plea for principles of economic justice and fair play with which I ended my article wouldn't make much sense. But part of our task is to determine who benefits from what, and how, so that we can better understand and try to span the differences among ourselves.*

*If the old left is dead, Doug Henwood speaks from the grave. He sputters at the thought that a radical politics based on class alone might be impossible. He treats class as an economic category, but race, age and gender as merely demographic factors. Is the "labor aristocracy" a fading memory? Not to the women and people of color who still earn far less than the mostly white guys who cheer Rush Limbaugh on.*

*If, in a conversation long ago, I slighted the importance of deindustrialization, it was because concerns about it were being couched in purely class-based terms, with an emphasis on the loss of the best-paying jobs. Yes, reindustrialization could serve broader interests, but if and only if it includes an explicit commitment to race and gender justice in the workplace.*

*I don't think that either the middle class or the working class as whole (however defined) will ever ally themselves against the very rich. I do think that workers willing to acknowledge and relinquish privileges based on race and gender could form a powerful coalition to contest class inequalities. The results could, in the long run, repay our efforts as well as realize our ideals.*

# Double standard

"Anti-Jewish sentiments are widespread among black neo-nationalists.... The seeds of this anti-Semitism were planted during the '60s."

So writes Salim Muwakkil (*ITT*, June 14). He lacks a sense of history. I happen to be reading *Black Boy*, by Richard Wright. The time is about 1918, and black anti-Semitism is already an established fact of life.

Wright says, "All of us black people who lived in the neighborhood hated Jews, not because they exploited us but because we had been taught at home and in Sunday School that Jews were 'Christ killers.' "

As for Professor Jeffries keeping his job after making an anti-Semitic speech, I wonder if a Jewish professor making an anti-black speech would have kept his job. I know that here at the University of New Mexico, a part-time teacher in the education department was fired without a hearing after being accused by a student of making an anti-Hispanic remark in the classroom.

Seems when it comes to academic freedom, this nation operates on a double standard.

Laverne Rison
Albuquerque, N.M.

# Correction

My recent article (*ITT*, Aug. 23) on Guyana's new president, Dr. Cheddi Jagan, contained a factual error, in stating that the president's wife, Janet Rosenberg, was a niece of Julius and Ethel Rosenberg. I had come across this bit of misinformation in numerous sources, and only after I submitted the article to *In These Times* did I learn that it was a Cold War rumor to "prove" that the Jagans were communists (and therefore unfit to hold the offices to which they were repeatedly elected). I notified my editor of the error, but perhaps because he was on vacation the correction did not get made. I am deeply embarrassed to have been responsible for another falsehood to be printed about the Jagans.

Rosa Jordan
Malibu, Calif.



**Editor's note:** Please try to keep letters under 250 words in length. Otherwise we may have to make drastic cuts, which may change what you wished to say. Also, if possible, please type and double-space letters—or at least write clearly and with wide margins.



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# InSHORT




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## ACCORD DISCORD

*Violence and the threat of intervention in Haiti*

Under U.N.-brokered accords signed this July on Governor's Island in New York, exiled President Jean-Bertrand Aristide is scheduled to return to Haiti on October 30 of this year. The accords were hailed by U.S. representative to the U.N. Madeleine Albright as a "triumph for multilateral diplomacy." Yet less than a month before the scheduled date, the country shows little sign of the "restoration of democracy" of which the United Nations negotiators spoke.

On September 11, one of the key supporters of Aristide's popular Lavalas




By Woody Igou

### Righteous relativist

*Playboy* magazine founder Hugh Hefner piously rejected offers to print a version of alleged Hollywood prostitution ringleader Heidi Fleiss' exploits. Said Hefner, "She's not my cup of tea. She's not my kind of girl."




*Such a fine, delicate line, Hugh.*

### Professional wrestling redux

Boxing continues to devolve toward slime. Ray Mercer, the boxer who allegedly attempted to bribe his opponent *during* a recent fight, is scheduled for a rematch with that boxer. The fight is being hyped as "The Final Verdict." And in Biloxi, Miss., 16 heavyweight boxers will fight elimination rounds until the last man is standing. The winner will have endured four bouts in one night to win this event, entitled "The People's Choice."




*Congratulations, you've just won the Most Likely to Endure Brain Damage award.*



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## Bush's small vindication

In what is now emerging as a trend among world leaders, French President Francois Mitterrand fell ill and threw up during a ceremony shortly after arriving in Seoul, South Korea. After two hours, Mitterrand attended a state dinner with South Korean President Kim, at which the French leader looked refreshed.




*And Kim was nervously wearing a plastic lap guard.*

## Nouvelle-macho cuisine

The printed menu at each table at Vernon Jordan's birthday party for President Clinton on Martha's Vineyard included the following entree: "Grilled harpooned local Vineyard swordfish."




*And don't forget the knife-flayed chicken or the throat-slit beef.*

*Stunned by a stupid statement? Nauseated by a noxious news item? Livid about a ludicrous lie? Contact the Appall-O-Meter,* In These Times, *2040 N. Milwaukee, Chicago, IL 60647.*

APPALL-O-METER SCALE
1. Weightless banality
2. Green Acres stupid
3. Malicious cretinism
4. Howard Sternesque
5. Mary Matalin mean
6. Gangrenous venality
7. A touch of evil
8. A cancer in the Zeitgeist
9. Je tu, Pol Pot?
10. Horseperson of the Apocalypse

movement was dragged out of a Port-au-Prince church and shot in the head, left dead in broad daylight in the middle of a crowded street. Antoine Izmery was a wealthy businessman who was one of the main financial backers of Aristide's 1990 electoral campaign. Although rich, he fought alongside Aristide for a democracy that would bring social justice to the poor. Izmery had organized the mass Saturday morning in the memory of victims of a massacre that had occurred in the church five years ago.

The murder of Izmery is not only a stunning blow to the popular movement, but also an undeniable rebuttal to those who have placed their faith in the promises of the U.N. accords and in the protective power of the U.N. civilian observers now in Haiti. Izmery's prominence calls attention to a political climate that has been growing markedly worse since the accords. Faced with death threats, the prosecutor investigating the case resigned only days after the killing. Since then, Aristide has called for the removal of coup leader Lt. Gen Raoul Cédras, the head of the Haitian armed forces, and of Michel Francois, the Port-au-Prince police chief, charging them with collusion in a series of recent political murders.

Since the U.N. agreement was signed on July 3, the U.N. and Organization of American States missions have reported at least 50 arbitrary executions in Port-au-Prince alone. "Crimes" such as distributing pro-Aristide leaflets have resulted in beatings and imprisonment. Last month, when Mayor Evans Paul returned to office after 23 months of hiding, he found himself blocked by armed thugs, while police officers fired on his supporters.

The aftermath of the accords is not altogether surprising. Under the agreement, amnesty has been granted to the putschists, who will retain their posts, while Cédras will supervise the transition period. Also per the accords, the U.N. Security Council voted unanimously to suspend the oil embargo that has paralyzed the country. Foreign aid has been promised by the United States and by the international community, with a large fraction of it earmarked for military "retraining." In sum, the pressures placed upon the junta to negotiate were not linked to Aristide's return, nor to the army relinquishing power. If anything, the accords legitimized the de facto rulers by recognizing Cédras on equal standing with the democratically elected president during the negotiation process on Governor's Island.

Yet while the accords have served to embolden the military, they have also infused the Haitian masses with hope and inspired new popular protest. The combination is a time bomb. As the U.N. mission in Haiti grows to reach a projected 1,000 technicians and advisers, the increasing violence poses the threat of precipitating a more direct foreign intervention—in the name of "peacekeeping"—as has happened once before in Haiti. In 1915, the mob lynching of President Vilbrun Guillaume provided the excuse for a 20-year U.S. occupation that left a legacy of neocolonial exploitation. The troops of 1915 were also presented as technicians and advisers, in what was called "Operation Uplift." As the *New York Times* argued at the time, "Haiti is clearly incapable of self-government without assistance."

The situation of recent years has been presented in much the same light. In response to the recent wave of violence, Michael Norton of the Associated Press presents these options: "Quit, make peace with soldiers and opposition-politicians on their terms, or appeal for foreign troops."

The Governor's Island accord is in part responsible for bringing Haiti to this critical junction, by indirectly validating the army's role while calling for a restoration of democracy that is impossible under such an army: a Catch-22.



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Father Antoine Adrien, a member of the presidential commission (and also the priest who was saying mass when Izmery was murdered), blamed the assassination on the international community for forcing the president to sign the accord, which called for what Aristide and others felt was an impossible transition.

Although the accord promises a restoration of democracy, in actuality it has contributed to a climate of chaos and violence, and to the increasing "need" for foreign presence. As the situation deteriorates and troops continue to arrive, the accord is paving the way for intervention, under the fig leaf of Aristide's return.

—Catherine Orenstein

# SLASHING SAFETY

*How workers get injured when Gore cuts red tape*

On the road to "creating a government that works better and costs less," Vice President Al Gore's task force came up with a brilliantly bad idea. It decided to turn over more of the responsibility for inspecting the health and safety of workplaces to employers.

Since 1980, Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) enforcement has been cut back and earlier progress toward a safer workplace slowed down—or even reversed. Gore's task force acknowledged the obvious: there are simply too few inspectors to enforce the law effectively.

Yet under the task force alternative, employers would hire a private inspection agency or employ trained non-management employees to inspect workplaces, then have their safety reports audited and subjected to random checks by OSHA. Given the glaring failures of securities auditors in the savings and loan crisis and other financial scandals of recent years, Labor Secretary Robert Reich's comparison of safety and financial audits may not bolster worker confidence.

AFL-CIO director of safety and health Peg Seminario says the task force is "misguided" in suggesting government should not have the primary responsibility for enforcement. In the '80s, when OSHA inspectors were permitted to skip inspections of companies whose level of injuries was low, "employers repeatedly lied and failed to report injuries," Seminario says. Now dozens of coal mine operators and inspectors are facing criminal prosecution for submitting fraudulent mine dust samples to the Mine Safety and Health Administration.

By contrast, unions want the government to mandate the creation of joint management-worker health and safety committees that would supplement government enforcement for workplaces of a dozen or more workers. OSHA reform legislation introduced by Sen. Edward Kennedy (D-MA) and Rep. William Ford (D-MI), which a Department of Labor task force is expected to support, would give these committees powers to oversee safety and make recommendations.

Some unions, including the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers (OCAW), insist workers should have the power to stop unsafe practices—halting work when necessary—or to quickly call in OSHA teams or outside experts of their own choosing. With such frontline vigilance, the federal government could avoid hiring armies of inspectors while guaranteeing far more effective enforcement.

The Gore proposal "conclusively demonstrated [that the Clinton adminis-

## MEDIA BEAT

By Pat Aufderheide

### Bigger, bigger

**The media mega-conglomerate trend continues, with the proposed merger of communications and entertainment corporations Viacom (whose enterprises include MTV, Nickelodeon, Showtime, broadcast stations and TV syndication) with Paramount (movies, TV shows, broadcast stations, USA Cable and books). The proposed deal—which as *In These Times* went to press was threatened by QVC's rival bid for Paramount—would be second in size only to the Time-Warner merger. It could create a cable TV powerhouse, with production and distribution combined.**

**The mergered marketplace makes the recent purchase of the *Boston Globe* by the *New York Times* seem positively benign. In fact, some industry analysts (such as John Morton in *American Journalism Review*) argue that without that relatively low-scale merger the *Globe* might have become part of Time-Warner or some other megaconglom.**

### Find the bias

**For years, conservative critics and members of Congress have bashed public broadcasting for its "liberal bias." But a recent study demonstrates instead a pronounced bias toward corporations and the status quo. The study—which analyzed public TV in the first half of 1992—was sponsored by Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting (FAIR) with a grant from the**



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MacArthur Foundation. The study found that of the third of public TV time taken up with public affairs, only a small percentage (8.4 percent) involved documentaries of the kind that have raised congressional ire. Only 7.3 percent of public TV programming is local (so much for being a community service). Furthermore, FAIR discovered that corporate experts appeared three times as often as "citizen activists" on public affairs shows, with the most egregious imbalance in business shows. Even Bill Moyers used more Republican than Democratic sources.

The FAIR findings may actually do PBS some good in congressional slugfests. PBS programming head Jennifer Lawson told the trade newspaper *Current* that charges from both the left and the right of PBS "bias" show that, indeed, "PBS has no political agenda."

For a summary of the report write *Extra!*, FAIR, 130 W. 25th St., New York NY 10001.

## GenrePerfect

If you sometimes feel the movie you're watching could have been concocted by computer, maybe it was. *Variety* reports that computer programs now exist both for formatting movie scripts and for idea development. A program called Plots Unlimited, for example, allows you to endlessly recombine elements from more than 13,000 plots. Other programs toss up hundreds of questions to help writers define characters.

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tration] intends to out-Republican the Republicans," says OCAW President Robert Wages. "The insensitivity of these people is shocking. They're not only abandoning workers, they're putting the public at great risk as well. They want to 're-invent' OSHA, which means do away with it. We want to keep it and make it stronger."

—David Moberg

# LABOR'S LOVE LOST

*UAW workers turn on Clinton, turn to Perot*

In early September, the *Detroit Free Press* conducted a poll among members of the United Auto Workers (UAW). The paper was primarily interested in what the union members thought about the forthcoming bargaining with the Big Three auto companies, but it also asked members about the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), Bill Clinton and Ross Perot. The results should be a warning to Clinton.

In 1988, the poll showed, UAW members backed George Bush over Democrat Michael Dukakis by 64 to 36 percent. In last year's election, UAW members went 58 percent for Clinton, 27 percent for Perot, and 15 percent for Bush. Now this year, when asked who they would support in a three-way contest among a Democrat, a Republican and an "independent like Ross Perot," 50 percent of UAW members would support Perot, 36 percent the Democrat and 14 percent the Republican. With Clinton and Perot, that's a virtual reversal of last fall's polling results.

The main reason seems to be Perot's opposition to and Clinton's support for NAFTA. Opposition to NAFTA is almost universal among UAW members—91.3 percent to 8.7 percent. But in questions about who would be better at "getting the economy moving," "keeping down taxes" and "getting things done in Washington," Perot led Clinton and the unnamed Republican in all three categories.

—John B. Judis

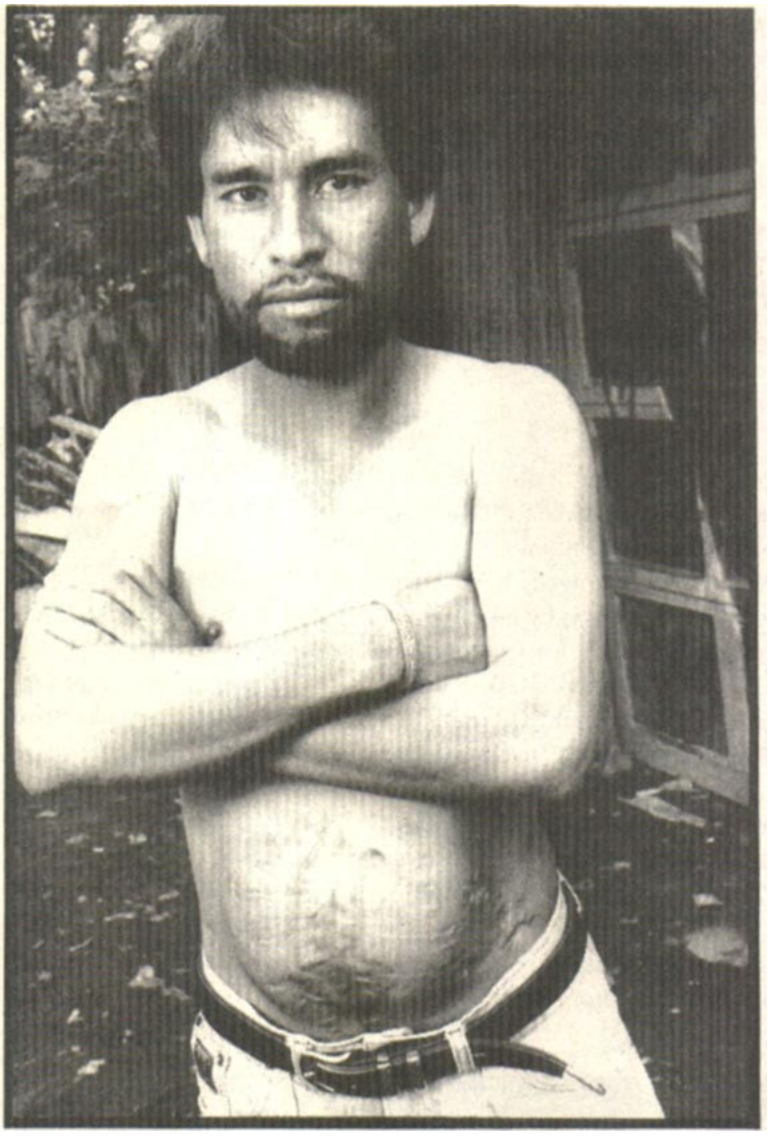
**ROUGH CUTS** **By JA Reid**






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## IN PERSON



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# SHOOT THE MESSENGER

*Carlos Gomez Lopez is still alive*

As Carlos Gomez Lopez unwraps the bandages around his stomach to reveal massive scars, he says, "This is what the Guatemalan military did to me." Only two small holes are left by a bullet that entered the 28-year-old union leader's chest one centimeter below his heart. The bullet ripped through his stomach, intestines and kidneys before exiting his back. It was not the bullet but the series of life-saving operations that left his chest and stomach looking like an abstract sculpture.

Gomez is one of thousands of Guatemalans in recent years who have suffered from the repressive Guatemalan military forces. Like most Guatemalans, Gomez is pessimistic about new Guatemalan President Ramiro de Leon Carpio's ability to improve human rights conditions. De Leon Carpio had gained respect as an advocate for human rights in Guatemala before ex-President Jorge Serrano's failed "self-coup" of May 30 landed him in the pres-

## ETC.

By Miles Harvey

### Smokescreen

**If Bill and Hillary Clinton are serious about slashing U.S. health care costs—expected to top $1 trillion by next year—they should re-examine Washington's love affair with the tobacco industry. Each year, smoking-related diseases are responsible for $21 billion in direct health care costs, according to the congressional Office of Technology Assessment. Another $47 billion in unnecessary costs are due to lost productivity and lost earnings associated with smoking.**

**Far from acting to curb these costs—let alone to slow a cigarette-related death toll of nearly 500,000 Americans per year—Congress has actively aided the tobacco industry. Capitol Hill has excluded cigarettes from the Consumer Product Safety Act and the Fair Labeling and Packaging Act. Lawmakers have also exempted tobacco from the Toxic Substances Act, even though a cigarette has more cyanide than was found in those tainted Chilean grapes that everyone was so worried about a few years back. In the last few years, Congress has killed or simply ignored at least 10 anti-smoking legislative initiatives.**

**The White House has been no better. Ronald Reagan and George Bush waged a costly "War on Drugs." This, despite studies showing that illegal drugs were connected to the deaths of 19,096**



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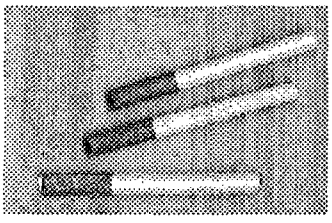
**Americans last year—one-twenty-sixth the number that were killed by cigarettes. And while the Reagan and Bush administrations were waging their "war" against "drug pushers" in Colombia, they were also actively pressuring other governments, especially in Asia, to open their markets to U.S. tobacco products.**

**The new issue of *World Smoking & Health*, a publication of the American Cancer Society, looks at why the White House and Capitol Hill continue to guarantee tobacco's special place as the only mass-marketed consumer product that causes widespread death and disease when used as intended.**

**The results are not surprising: the tobacco lobby has bought out our elected politicians.**

**And the bribes are getting bigger. Industry contributions to incumbent U.S. senators through 1991 and the first half of 1992 were up 192 percent over the contributions made during *all* of the 1987-88 campaign cycle, according to one article.**

**Will Clinton change things? Don't hold your breath. Several top White House advisers—including Mickey Kantor, the president's former campaign manager and current U.S. Trade Representative—have close ties to the tobacco industry.**



idency. "What the international community doesn't understand is that the country is not a democracy led by a civilian president. It is an oligarchy controlled by the military elite," says Gomez.

After nearly losing his life, Gomez has more than enough reason to be critical of the new government. He accompanied the first international delegation that traveled by land to visit the Communities of Peoples in Resistance (CPR), Guatemala's internal refugees who fled their villages due to the military repression of the early '80s. The delegation went to investigate the military's and Serrano's claims that the CPR was the "right arm" of the Guatemalan National Revolutionary Union. Says Gomez, "What we saw was that the CPR are an indigenous Mayan, civilian population that are forced to live in destitute, nomadic conditions due to constant attacks by the Guatemalan military. While we were there, the military flew over the communities at night to intimidate us."

On Feb. 25, 1993, Gomez was returning from his visit to the CPR to his home in Quezaltenango when his bus was stopped by a group of armed men wearing army fatigues and hoods to cover their faces. The men forced everyone except Gomez off the bus. Then they beat him, stole his video equipment and tapes, and shot him in the chest. "After they shot me, all I could feel was a fire in my heart," he says. "I laid still so that they would think I was dead." Before the assailants fled they shot the tires out of the bus, leaving the passengers stranded in the mountains. Other union organizers who were accompanying Gomez flagged down a car that took him to the nearest police station. "The police refused to help me, even though I was losing blood rapidly. They said I was going to die anyway. They wouldn't allow drivers to take me to a hospital," says Gomez. Fortunately, a citizen disobeyed the police and drove him to the nearest hospital. Even though the ambush on Gomez points directly toward the army, the official story from the Guatemalan government is that it was an act of "common delinquency."

Gomez survived the attack through support from both the Guatemalan and international communities. Nevertheless, two more attempts were made on his life while he was recovering at a hospital in Guatemala. For his own safety Gomez was forced to leave Guatemala, and his wife and three children, and to go to Chicago, where he received treatment from the Marjorie Kovler Center for the Treatment of Survivors of Torture.

After several months of recuperation, Gomez decided to return to Guatemala this July to continue his work and to be with his family. "I found that from the moment I returned I was being monitored," says Gomez. He left the country again for both his safety and to receive further medical treatment. "It is still not safe for me to be in the country," he says.

"The new president has his hands tied," says Gomez. "He knows that if he tries to exert pressure on the military he will lose his power or even his life." Only a few weeks after De Leon Carpio was appointed to the presidency, his cousin Jorge Carpio Nicole, leader of the Union of the National Center and candidate for president in 1991, was murdered in an ambush in the same style as the one directed against Gomez. "This was a clear message to the president by the military to not try to change the status quo," says Gomez.

As Guatemalans wait for a peaceful settlement to the 30-year internal conflict, human rights abuses by the Guatemalan military continue. Nonetheless, the Clinton administration announced that it will release $2.5 million in military aid to the Guatemalan government as a gesture of support to the new president. Says Gomez, "Without demilitarization, Guatemala will never be a democracy where human rights are respected." —Bill Wagner



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THE FIRST STONE

# GRASS ROOTS OR ASTROTURF?

**By Joel Bleifuss**

People power was the one trump card that the left could play when challenging a status quo protected by the best politicians big money can buy.

No more. Nowadays, a new breed of public relations (PR) professional has become adept at manufacturing and packaging "grass-roots" expressions of civic outrage and then delivering those messages from the voter to elected officials. These flacks have adopted the tactics of grass-roots organizers, but they employ them on behalf of corporate America.

William Greider, author of *Who Will Tell the People*, was among the first to expose these ersatz organizers. Greider details how the auto industry hired a PR firm to put a halt on clean-air legislation that would have mandated that Detroit build cars with better fuel efficiency.

The brakeman for this effort was Jack Bonner of Bonner and Associates, a Washington-based PR firm that, by its own description, "specializes in organizing and conducting grass-roots campaigns at the federal and state levels." A Bonner and Associates advertisement, tailored for the Clinton era, asks: "Do you have a tough tax battle ahead?" and offers "Quality grass-roots support to help you win."

Bonner, a former aide to the late Sen. John Heinz (R-PA), employs the political marketing technology perfected by the Republican right during the Reagan era. Bonner's office, for example, has a $1 million-plus computerized telecommunications system used by 300 hired tele-organizers. With Bonner's system, one of his marketers can fish through computerized membership lists, find and phone a sympathetic person, coach that person on the finer points of the issue, and then patch the call through to a congressional office. The legislator's staff has no way of knowing that the call is not a spontaneous expression of concern.

"The golden age of grass roots has arrived," Jack Bonner told the *New York Times*' Stephen Engelberg. "In the past a lot of businesses wouldn't go to the grass roots because they thought they could contain their problems in D.C., either by lobbying or by George Bush vetoing anti-business legislation. Well, that veto isn't there anymore."

But Bonner is there. He told Greider how he put together a corporate political campaign: "We sit down with the lobbyists and ask: How much heat do you want on these guys? Do you want 10 local groups or 200 groups? Do you want 100 phone calls from constituents or 1,000 calls? Obviously, you target senators inclined to go your way but who need some additional cover. They need to be able to say they've heard from people back home on this issue."

Bonner told Greider: "On the clean-air bill, we bring to the table a third party—'white hat' groups who have no financial interest. It's not the auto industry trying to protect its financial stake. Now it's senior citizens worried about getting out of small cars with walkers. Easter Seal, Multiple Sclerosis—a lot of these people have braces, wheelchairs, walkers. It's farm groups worrying about small trucks. It's people who need station wagons to drive kids to Little League games. There are groups with political juice and they're white hat."

To get the most from that juice, Bonner squeezes out the pulp. "Politics turns on emotion," said Bonner. "That's why industry has lost in the past and that's why we win. We bring emotion to the table."

Peter Stone reports in the *National Journal* that Bonner charges his corporate clients on a piecemeal basis. In addition to manufacturing grass-roots mail and phone campaigns, the company engages in the more upscale form of astroturf organizing known as "grass-tops." Bonner and Associates will get "community leaders" or friends of members of Congress to write letters to any member of Congress for a price of $350 to $500 per letter. For $5,000 to $9,000, Bonner will arrange a personal meeting between supportive community leaders and a lawmaker.

Once a lone player in the the PR astroturf field, Bonner now has competition, including PR giants such as Burson-Marsteller and Fleishman-Hillard. Corporations and trade associations that have hired PR firms to score some points on astroturf include U.S. Tobacco, McDonald's, Philip Morris, the American Insurance Association, the American Nuclear Energy Council, Exxon, Chase Manhattan Bank, Dow Chemical, the American Petroleum Institute and the National Rifle Association.

PR is at its best when the tracks of the PR professional are nowhere to be seen. Nonetheless, corporate-sponsored grass-roots campaigns are known to have helped defeat a range of legislative and administrative policy proposals, including Clinton's proposed energy tax and Bush's proposed tax on profits from life insurance annuities.



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The success of Bonner and Associates is shown on an office wall adorned with framed letters of appreciation from the Pharmaceutical Manufacturers Association, the Smokeless Tobacco Council and the American Bankers Association.

The bankers were concerned about congressional attempts to legislate lower credit-card interest rates. To defeat this proposal, Bonner produced 10,000 "grass-roots" phone calls to 10 members of the House Banking Committee. The effort died in committee and the American Bankers Association paid Bonner about $400,000.

Of course, not everyone is so appreciative of Bonner's efforts. Easter Seal did not welcome Bonner's attempts to extract "political juice" from the disabled. Easter Seal director Joe Romer told *Common Cause Magazine* that he resented the fact that "corporate interests try to manipulate and use small nonprofits like ours ... as a pawn in a political battle [against fuel-efficient automobiles] not related to people with disabilities."

Fred Wertheimer of Common Cause has said that lobbying efforts like Bonner's "could give new meaning to the phrase, 'Reach out and touch someone.' " Bonner predictably cloaks himself in the First Amendment. "Have we come to a point in our democracy where it's legitimate for environmentalists to take their message to the people but not for industry to do the same?" he asks.

No, we haven't. But we are at the point where corporate PR firms like Bonner and Associates are changing the nature of politics. Corporate grass-roots campaigns involve a corruption of the political system that current efforts at campaign finance reform can't touch.

Among those who have helped me recognize the dangers posed by an out-of-control PR industry is John Stauber of Madison, Wis. Stauber is the editor and publisher of *PR Watch*, a new quarterly devoted to exposing the machinations of the PR industry. Stauber developed his interest in the political power of PR through his work organizing Wisconsin dairy farmers against a multifaceted PR effort to win Food and Drug Administration approval of bovine growth hormone—an uneconomical, untested and udderly unnecessary biotech product. (See *In These Times*, Jan. 15, 1992, and "The First Stone," May 3, 1993.)

"Reading Greider's book last year was the final straw," says Stauber. "He hit the nail on the head in his two pages on Jack Bonner. Unfortunately, Bonner is on the cutting edge. It is critical that people fighting for change realize that this is not 1970, when you are up against a corporation and their PR spokesperson. This is 1993 and we're up against a coalition of the most powerful and well-funded international PR firms in existence. Typically, a Fortune 500 firm will employ half a dozen PR firms at any one time. And the growing trend is one-stop-shopping—lobbying, public relations, political consulting, a legal team and a counter-activism grass-roots campaign all under one roof."

Stauber counts on the fact that in the PR industry there is a dearth of corporate loyalty, a surfeit of backstabbing and some untapped deposits of guilt. "I've gotten encouragement from people within the PR establishment," he said. "Luckily, there are people who work for these firms that have pangs of conscience. PR professionals will be sending information to *PR Watch* on the less savory aspects of their companies and the work they do."

Stauber also sees *PR Watch* as providing a service to the press. "*PR Watch* will help the media become more sophisticated about the ways in which they are being manipulated," he says. "And they are manipulated. If they weren't, there wouldn't be those billions of dollars being spent on PR." ◁

*Subscriptions to* PR Watch *are $60 for an individual, $300 for a corporation and free for those interested in an "info-exchange." Send checks to 3318 Gregory Street, Madison, WI 53711.*

**THE ADVENTURES OF A HUGE MOUTH** **by Peter Hannan**






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MIDEAST PEACE

# Past imperfect

*To reach a true reconciliation, Israelis and Palestinians need to put ancient history behind them.*

By Fred Halliday

No one who has had any contact with the Middle East, from near or far, can fail to have been affected by the developments of the past several weeks. The Israeli-PLO agreement has its dangers, of course, and leaves many questions unanswered. It may very well go wrong. The deal, agreed to by two quite precarious national leaderships, is, in historical perspective, greatly unfair to the Palestinians—who will end up with, at best, about a quarter of what was once their territory, and for whom there is no guarantee of a sovereign state. Both Palestinians and Israelis have legitimate concerns as to what all this will entail in security terms.

Yet, despite these reservations, it is a welcome event. For all concerned, it arouses hope, and it sets a marker for future advance. It affirms the principle of mutual recognition by Palestinians and Israelis, and acknowledges the possibility of a two-state solution. If things break down in the months and years to come, the parties will at least have this to come back to.

Why, beyond mutual exhaustion and the workings of years of secret contacts, did Yasser Arafat and Yitzhak Rabin agree to this compromise? In addition to the internal pressures of the *intifada*, three international factors contributed to the agreement: the end of the Cold War, which lessened the sense on both sides that they could count on the unconditional support of external patrons; the Gulf War, which highlighted Israel's vulnerability and undermined the self-confidence of the PLO; and, perhaps most importantly, the rise of Islamic fundamentalism, which promises both Arafat and Rabin many dangers in the years to come—dangers both will be better able to face if they have worked out some deal between them.

Whatever happens in Jericho or Jerusalem, these are the enduring and major trends that are pushing the two sides, and the other secular Arab regimes around them, to the table. They are, as it were, battening down the roof in case the storm breaks.

If the agreement signals a shift in attitudes by the protagonists, it also forces a comparable shift among those following it from outside, and nowhere more so than in regard to the legitimacy of the Palestinian cause. Outsiders found it easy to criticize the Palestinians for not accepting the realities and legitimacy of an Israeli state, accusing them of intransigence, anti-Semitism, and so on. But this was unrealistic. No people in the world could be expected to accept that, in the space of two or three generations, the majority of their national territory would be taken over by a settler population.

For Palestinians and Israelis, the agreement opens up the possibility—and it's no more than that—of a better future. But it is not just for those directly involved that it may offer some emancipation. Throughout this conflict, the discussion outside the Middle East has been polarized and embittered, repetitive and selective. Everyone knows the arguments on both sides: you can read them in the newspaper letters pages to this day.

Little of this international debate contributed to fostering a solution, which cannot be derived from partisan claims: a solution has to rest on mutual recognition and a willingness, not to trust completely, but to start building trust. Some argued that this agreement should have been signed in Oslo, not in Washington. Actually, it should have been signed in Jerusalem, the desired city of residence of both Rabin and Arafat. When it is possible for both men to meet in that city, it will be possible to talk of a new era of trust.

Much of this debate invoked history, and, indeed, any settlement can be seen to rest on an attempt to reconcile the claims of history, the claims of both peoples to this land. For outsiders, this history, replete with biblical and classical res-



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cnances, seemed to invest this conflict with a special significance and special difficulty.

But one may wonder whether all this history did anyone much good, whether the sense of historical uniqueness, the aura of tragedy and doom, was or is justified. The Israelis and the Palestinians have behaved, and will continue to behave, in much the same way as other peoples in the world.

And this is in part because of something neither side will admit—namely that, far from being the creatures of an ancient and determining history, they are the creatures of contingency, products of an arbitrary and quite recent history, which has created two nations, in the sense of distinct political communities, in a matter of a few decades. The real reconciliation will rest not on arbitrating the historical or ancestral claims but rather on denying the relevance of history at all.



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The Jews invoke their biblical claims; the Palestinians see themselves as the heirs of centuries of residence and descendants of the Canaanites before them. But here, as in so many other parts of the world, this invocation of history is spurious. The division of the world's people into nations, each claiming a separate state on the basis of distinct identities, is a recent phenomenon. The Palestinian nation is part of this process, with the added fact that it has been forged in the conflict with the Zionist project itself, i.e., since the '20s.

Similar elisions occur on the Jewish side. A Jewish people has existed for millennia, but there is no Jewish "nation" in the modern political sense. Most Jews did not, before 1948, live in Palestine; most do not now live in Israel. Out of a part of the Jewish people, an Israeli nation, Hebrew-speaking and resident in the Middle East, has been created. Its opponents deny it legitimacy on the grounds that it was created through immigration and settlement—but this argument would, if generalized, be true for many other nations the world over, including the United States. As a Celt, resident in Britain, I have some pertinent thoughts about the Anglo-Saxon illegal immigrants of the seventh and eighth centuries.

Nationalists themselves, and those who invest nations with deep historical roots, deny the modernity of the nationalist project and try to divine the roots of today's claims in a long history. We can, if we try, locate those peoples and traditions that are the ancestors of today's nations. But the reasons why particular nationalisms arise and flourish today have much more to do with contemporary grievances and aspirations than with the distant past.

In the chaos of the post-communist world, all sorts of nationalisms have arisen. What is striking about so many of them is how, in their feverish invocation of the past, they ignore the lessons of other conflicts and reproduce the myths of other nationalisms. It is one of the paradoxes of nationalism that while each nation claims to be unique, they are, in their essentials, all the same.

Take the claim to territory. Croats denounce Serbs who, it is said, were brought to their land by the Ottomans in the 16th century. Both Armenians and Azeris talk nonsense about their respective claims to Nagorno-Karabakh. In the case of Northern Ireland, nationalists deny the rights of Protestants on the grounds that the latter were colonizers brought over—in the 17th century. As one IRA sympathizer put it to me some years ago, "The Protestants can have their fucking right to self-determination—provided they go and do it somewhere else."

The search is on for "pure" members of "pure" nations, and this is linked to the maximum claim on territory. Traditions—some genuine, some not—are cobbled together to create new nationalisms. But history is no guide as to who or what these peoples are, and can provide little or no guide as to how best to settle the questions in dispute.

The common ground of Israelis and Palestinians—and the feature they share with those other nations in conflict in the world—may lie in the very contingency of their claims and in the arbitrary nature of the entities they now claim to represent. By asserting this common contingency, we do not deny that either Israelis or Palestinians have the right to states of their own, or that, in the name of some higher cosmopolitan ideal, they should live together. It is obvious that they cannot live in one state, and that they are both entities entitled to states of their own.

They are, in this as in other respects, normal nations. The

*Continued on page 39*



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MIDEAST PEACE

# The road ahead

## *A Palestinian activist explains what it will take to create a lasting peace.*

**By Khalil E. Jahshan**

*Few Americans understand the intricacies, challenges and stakes of the Mideast peace process better than Khalil E. Jahshan, executive director of the National Association of Arab Americans. Born in Nazareth in 1948, the year Israel became an independent state, Jahshan has long been active in the struggle for Palestinian self-determination. Since becoming head of the premier foreign-policy lobbying arm of the Arab-American community in 1990, he has had an inside view of the peace process. Two months ago, he met one-on-one with Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres in Jerusalem. He has also had close contacts with the Bush and Clinton administrations and with the Palestine Liberation Organization. Jahshan met several times with Yasser Arafat during the PLO leader's recent trip to Washington, and was on hand for the signing of the historic accords.* In These Times *asked Jahshan to examine the future of the peace process.*

The extraordinary ceremony marking the peace accord between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization brought hope to Arabs and Jews entangled by decades of confrontation, mistrust and violence. But as the dust produced by this emotional and surprising event settles, it becomes necessary to put things in perspective.

First of all, the Israeli-PLO agreement on interim self-government in the West Bank and Gaza and the letters of mutual recognition exchanged by the former antagonists are simply the first steps in a long and arduous journey toward a comprehensive, just and lasting peace throughout the region. They provide a basis to establish the mutual trust necessary to negotiate the details for implementing Palestinian self-government.

Second, the road toward this objective is riddled with dangers, political pitfalls and potential diplomatic setbacks. Therefore, the overwhelming task of fleshing out and implementing this agreement requires new thinking and solid commitment on the part of all parties concerned to meeting the long-term objectives of the ongoing peace process.

What needs to be done to avoid or overcome these potential roadblocks?

•In contrast to the negotiating phase of the Israeli-PLO accord, the role of the sponsors—particularly that of the United States—is vital and indispensable during the implementation stage. President Clinton and Secretary of State Warren Christopher have emphasized the U.S. commitment to the process and its success. Now, they face the awesome task of translating their words into deeds. The price required for "not allowing this agreement to fail" may prove to be a heavy one in both financial and political terms. The administration must be willing to shoulder this responsibility in its capacity as a "full partner" in the Madrid peace negotiations that have been taking place for the past two years.

•The Israeli-Palestinian accord was negotiated in secret, outside the Madrid framework and without direct U.S. participation. The Clinton administration acted wisely by quickly giving enthusiastic support for the finished agreement, providing a venue for its signing, and committing its active involvement in future negotiations. The United States must move swiftly to combine the two diplomatic processes. This means bringing the new accord into the Madrid framework, making the necessary adjustments to reconcile the two approaches, removing the restrictive conditions and terms of reference that paralyzed the Madrid negotiations and taking advantage of the momentum generated by the agreement to rejuvenate those negotiations.

•Although the importance of the agreement must not be underestimated, it left many important issues unresolved. The substantive and historically most difficult issues separating the parties were postponed to a phase of negotiations—scheduled to start no later than September 1996—that will determine the final status of the West Bank and Gaza. This postponement of negotiations



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on such vital issues as Jerusalem, refugees, settlements and borders requires an awesome leap of faith on the part of a majority among the Palestinians, especially those in the diaspora, who remain largely skeptical about the accord. Thus it is incumbent upon the signatories and the witnesses to this agreement to ensure that these items remain on the agenda and are adequately addressed at the appointed time.

•One of the weaknesses of the Madrid formula that contributed to the stalemate of the past two years was the absence of a clear and enforceable timetable. The new agreement overcomes this problem by committing the parties to specific deadlines—the first one of which comes on October 13, when the Declaration of Principles enters into force. The sponsors must see to it that these deadlines are strictly adhered to by the parties, regardless of changes on the Israeli or the Palestinian sides.

•The nature of the agreement between Israel and the PLO and the secret manner in which it was concluded have directly or indirectly contributed to the isolation of Jordan, Lebanon and Syria, the other three partners in the peace process. It is of utmost importance to the welfare of the Israeli-PLO accord to get all the parties quickly on board. Those excluded from the deal are left with only two choices: to become full partners in the process of reconciliation by promptly reaching similar accords in their own respective tracks or to oppose the agreement and seek to undo it. The U.S.-brokered 1983 agreement between Israel and Lebanon, which failed because it excluded other nations in the region, is a case in point.

•Once successful, peacemaking is exciting and politically rewarding. However, like war, peace has a price tag. The agreement between Israel and the PLO will never be fulfilled unless those who support it mobilize their financial resources to translate the document into reality. The United States must take a leading role in convincing the international community—particularly the European allies, Japan and members of the Arab Gulf Cooperation Council—to overcome donor fatigue and contribute the funds needed to restructure Palestinian society. Palestinian needs are massive indeed. Experts estimate that a minimum of $1 billion per year will be needed over the next five years to rebuild the infrastructure of the West Bank and Gaza. At this price, peace might look very expensive—but it is nowhere near as expensive as war or the status quo.

•In his meetings with U.S. officials in Washington, PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat said that the agreement rests on two pillars: security and economic prosperity. The Palestinians must ensure stability in order to allow economic development to take place. The first challenge that lies ahead for the Palestinian leadership is to fashion strong and democratic political institutions that will be able to govern a Palestinian state and, at the same time, ensure free, democratic expression. They must determine how to achieve a stable environment without being oppressive or intolerant toward legitimate and democratic opposition.

Palestinian chaotic democracy or "the democracy of the guns," as Arafat prefers to call the current situation, must be transformed into genuine democracy, in which basic and universal civil, human and political rights are respected and protected. After 25 years of oppressive Israeli occupation, the Palestinians in the territories have extremely high expectations in this regard.

The second challenge lies in the Palestinian leadership's ability and willingness to rebuild an independent and strong Palestinian economy and effect rapid and steady economic growth through free enterprise, private initiative and entrepreneurship. The adoption of the classic Third World pattern of a centrally directed and strictly controlled economy will not appeal to Palestinian and international investors, whose capital is vital in the attempt to transform the West Bank and Gaza into a Middle Eastern Singapore.

•Article III of the Israeli-Palestinian agreement on interim self-government provides for direct, free and general political elections for a Palestinian Council in the West Bank and Gaza. The elections will be held under international supervision no later than June 1994. The world community, friend and foe alike, will look at these elections as a test of PLO willingness to live and let live. In order to secure and maintain support for his cause, Arafat must ensure that these elections are free, democratic and all-inclusive. They should



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signal that a Palestinian multi-party system is emerging in the territories. The opposition must have a fair and unimpeded chance to present its case.

•Arafat must also focus his attention on the concerns of many Palestinians in the diaspora who, under the leadership of the PLO, have come to espouse a two-state solution to the crisis and who perceive the Israeli-PLO agreement as offering only a truncated entity in the Gaza Strip and the Jericho area. The PLO must reassure them that self-determination, including the option of independent statehood, remains its primary long-term objective. Furthermore, both Israel and the United States must come to terms with the fact that an independent Palestinian state is inevitable and that their continued opposition to it, which stems from various domestic considerations, is liable to derail the whole process as the parties get closer to the permanent status phase.

It is obvious that the list of challenges and potential obstacles is long and overwhelming. The Palestinians cannot overcome these difficulties alone. If the breakthrough achieved in the Israeli-PLO agreement is to be capitalized upon, it is essential that both Palestinians and Israelis see concrete, tangible improvements on the ground. The world community must be willing to commit the financial, technological and humanitarian assistance necessary to improve the standard of living of Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza. The Palestinian interim self-governing authority must be successful in providing the stability necessary to ease the security concerns of Israelis.

The Israeli government must exhibit the flexibility necessary to negotiate the remaining details for Palestinian self-government and the critical issues that must be resolved in the future. Finally, the Clinton administration must provide the leadership to nudge the process forward whenever negotiations stagnate.

If all parties are willing to make the necessary commitments and compromises, the signing of the Israeli-PLO agreement in Washington on September 13 will be seen as the prelude to peace in the Middle East. The prospects for a successful implementation of the Israeli-PLO agreement are limited, however, unless such determination and good will are forthcoming. ◀

# Report from Jericho

**Jericho is a small desert oasis in the Israeli-occupied West Bank, located just 10 kilometers from the Allenby Bridge and Israel's border with Jordan. One of the oldest continually inhabited cities on earth, with ancient ruins believed to be over 7,000 years old, Jericho is inhabited by farmers and shepherds who brag about their bananas, oranges and dates, not the confrontations they have had with Israeli soldiers. And now, Jericho will be the first West Bank city to be governed by Palestinians, according to the recently announced Israeli-PLO agreement.**

**The Gaza Strip, home to more than 770,000 Palestinians, including more than 450,000 impoverished refugees, is getting most of the world's attention. Gaza has been a center of anti-Israel resistance as far back as 1955, when Egyptian-trained Palestinian *fedayeen* (commandos) raided Israeli border villages. It is where the Palestinian *intifada* started in December 1987, and where the Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas, has its origins. For several years, Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres had been talking about getting rid of Gaza. But the PLO refused to take Gaza alone—it insisted that a West Bank city had to be part of any agreement to to show "the unity of the territories."**

**The borders of this newly autonomous Jericho area, which the Palestinians call their "national authority," have not yet been determined. But the "Jericho" in "Gaza-Jericho First" will probably consist of all or most of the 380 square kilometers in the district of Jericho. This includes the ancient and the modern city as well as several villages and two refugee camps—Ain el Sultan and Aqbat Jabber—with a total population of around 30,000.**

**Jericho's strategic location—so close to Jordan—was certainly not the only reason it was chosen by the PLO over more obvious choices, such as Nablus and Hebron, both hotbeds of nationalist activity during the *intifada*. Jericho residents were not very active in the *intifada*. But local people are strong supporters of Yasser Arafat and his Fatah party, and most are willing to give him and the Israeli-PLO agreement a chance. "We trust Arafat because he is the strongest and has led the PLO for over 20 years," says Isaac Shawa, a native of Jericho who runs a grocery store in the city center. Fatah dominates the Chamber of Commerce and holds all 13 seats in the council governing the Farmers Union. On September 18, the Farmers Union organized a parade of 51 tractors to demonstrate the strength of the farming sector, and almost every tractor carried a picture of Arafat. FIDA (the Democratic Palestinian Union), the party of Arafat's Information Counselor Yasser Abbed Rabbo, also has substantial support in Jericho.**

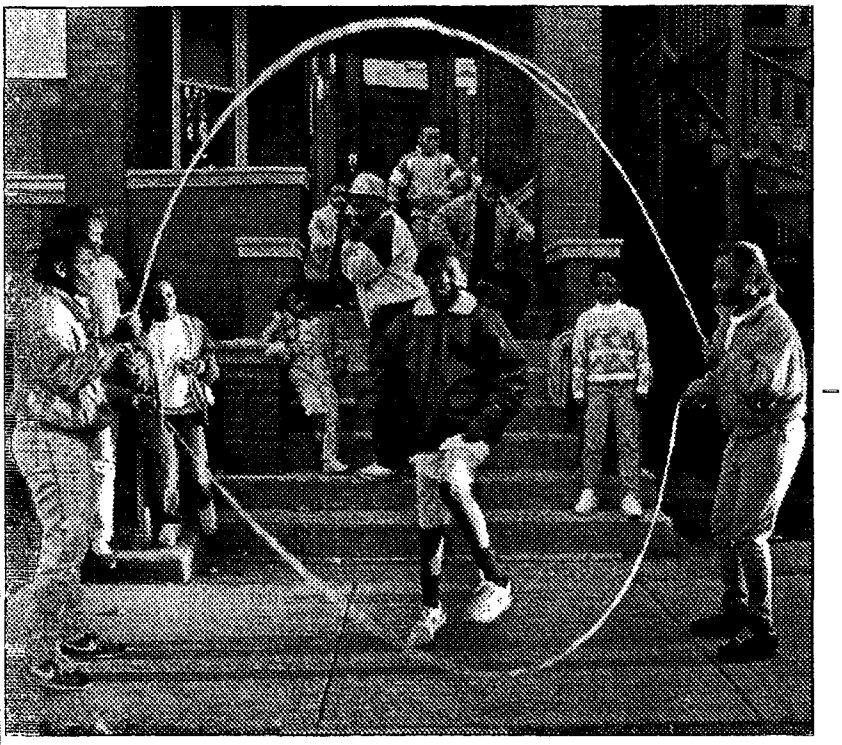
**Arafat and the pro-peace forces have a tough battle ahead of them in Gaza, where Hamas recently turned out 10,000 people to an opposition rally. But in Jericho there is little support for the Islamic fundamentalists, or for secular rejectionists such as George Habash's Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine. Sheikh Harb Jabber, who preaches in Jericho's only mosque, identifies with the "Haraka Islamiyya," a euphemism for Hamas. "Yasser Arafat has no right to give away any part of Palestine. It's holy Muslim land and belongs to all the Muslims of the world," says the Sheikh. He is convinced the people of Jericho will come around to his way of thinking, but so far he's making little headway.**

**—Andrea Barron**



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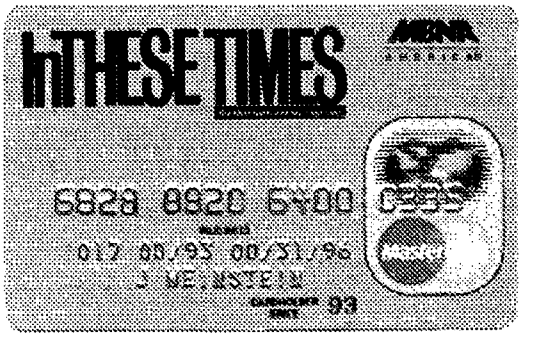
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COMMUNITY ORGANIZING

# Health snare?

*Supporters of a single-payer health care system are split over whether to back Clinton's problematic proposal.*

By David Moberg

President Clinton's health plan poses a tough choice for supporters of a single-payer Canadian-style national health insurance system. Do they accept his complex proposal as half a loaf—one that might be buttered up in Congress but must be defended from the hungry anti-reform wolves? Or do they reject it as a moldy crumb, unlikely to nourish public craving for health care reform?

Under the single-payer approach, the government insures all Americans within a uniform plan that includes cost controls and is financed through progressive taxes. The congressional legislation embodying these ideas—Minnesota Sen. Paul Wellstone and Washington Rep. Jim McDermott's American Health Security Act—now has five Senate and 89 House co-sponsors, as well as the support of roughly half of organized labor and hundreds of citizens' groups.

Clinton, however, long ago rejected this approach without serious consideration. He was unwilling to challenge the power of the insurance industry. And he didn't want to give the appearance that he was proposing a government-run health plan or new taxes.

This initial profile in political cowardice led to a jerry-built system that nevertheless pursues crucial, long overdue goals—universal health insurance with fairly broad benefits and cost controls. But it does so in a way that fails to realize major potential savings in efficiency, perpetuates inequities in health care, relies on inadequate and regressive funding, and unnecessarily enshrines a powerful role for private insurance companies while restricting consumer choice of health care providers.

The draft version of the plan floating around just prior to the president's address to the nation confirmed what was already known of its broad outlines. Under the Clinton proposal:

•Everyone, regardless of work or health status, would be insured.

•States would set up regional health alliances, each of which would act as a purchasing cooperative for individuals, who would choose among competing health plans.

•The plans would provide standardized benefits and fall within a specified range of costs.

•There would be restrictions imposed on how fast premiums could rise. This represents the Clinton proposal's main cost-containment mechanism—despite White House claims that competition between the insurers will keep costs down.

•States could, if they pass several hurdles, choose to set up their own single-payer plans. This provision is a concession both to single-payer advocates and to sparsely populated states—accounting for about one-fourth of the U.S. population—where competition among plans may not be feasible.

Clinton's projected financing of coverage will be highly controversial. Paying for the coverage of those who are currently uninsured and for the expansion of many other Americans' benefits would be accomplished mainly by constraining the growth in Medicare and Medicaid costs. But many experts doubt that such savings can be achieved without reducing health care for the elderly.

Higher sin taxes would be the only new direct taxes. Employers would pay premiums for all employees that would cover 80 percent of the cost of an average plan, although there would be lower assessments for small businesses and limits on premium costs for all employers. Employees would pay 20 percent of the average premium, although there would be a complex system of subsidies for low-income workers. Employees could get their employer to pay the whole premium.



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Compared to income taxes or a payroll tax, this system would be economically regressive, basically charging the same premium for all employees. And anyone choosing a plan with above-average costs would pay the extra tab. Everyone would also have to pay a fee for each doctor visit or prescription. This fee, critics argue, would be a nuisance for the middle class, a barrier to care for the poor.

Clinton's plan now will be the center of debate, although Congress—through a multitude of hearings—will write legislation that could differ significantly from the White House plan. Clinton, as always, will be open to pressure and compromise. Which way will he bend?

Citizen Action, a 3 million-member national network of state consumer groups, has been a leading grass-roots advocate of single-payer insurance. Now it is arguing that Clinton should be applauded for what he has proposed—though single payer is still the best solution, as well as the standard for measuring and improving the administration's plan. Most of the pro-single-payer unions (see *In These Times*, April 19) have also praised the strong points of Clinton's plan, including the AFL-CIO, whose Health Care Committee has officially endorsed the proposal.

By contrast, some single-payer advocates have launched a frontal attack on the plan. Public Citizen health expert Dr. Sidney Wolfe calls Clinton's plan "a cruel fraud," and Physicians for a National Health Plan leader Quentin Young calls it "a formula for total disaster." Neighbor to Neighbor and the Universal Health Care Action Network (UHCAN), a nationwide coalition of grass-roots groups (see *In These Times*, April 19), are also firmly committed to continuing their push for the Wellstone-McDermott legislation.

But Robert Creamer, director of Illinois Public Action, a Citizen Action affiliate, argues against trying to defeat Clinton's plan in hopes of passing the Wellstone-McDermott bill. Creamer says he still believes a single-payer system would be the best way of achieving the president's goals of universal coverage and cost containment. But the first priority, he argues, is beating back opponents of reform and universal coverage, then working to improve the Clinton legislation by making it more like single payer.

Ultimately, many single-payer advocates think their approach will be implemented state by state. As Public Action's John Cameron explains, "If we get the ability to implement single payer in the states, it will happen in some states and become an inevitable march toward that."

The health care fight will be "within the Clinton plan," says International Ladies Garment Workers Union vice president Susan Cowell. "I don't see a political strategy for passing Wellstone-McDermott. A strategy to stick with that is a decision to kill national health insurance."

Others disagree. "I'm impatient with the idea that to articulate what's right is to be an enemy of health reform," says Sara Nichols, a Public Citizen health care lobbyist. "Articulating what should be and comparing that to the Clinton plan—which is what we intend to do—does noth-



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ing but add to the debate and helps Clinton. This is the high-water mark of what he is pushing for. It can only get weaker if there aren't critics from the left."

Likewise, UHCAN director Diane Lardie sees Clinton's speech as "the trigger moment, the time for us to get out and tell the truth." Neighbor to Neighbor director of health care organizing Glen Schneider hopes to "blow open the debate" between Clinton's plan and the American Health Security Act "and see where the chips fall."

Public opinion on health care is sufficiently combustible that the debate could indeed be blown open. There is widespread public anxiety about health insurance and overall discomfort with the health care system. Pollster Celinda Lake reports that people deeply distrust competition in health care. They want government involved—but more as a regulator than as a manager. Rhetorically, they believe in revolution, but they could be satisfied with modest reforms.

As organizations jockey for position, there's a political wild card that could trump their precarious political balancing acts of qualified support for the president's plan. In 1988, Congress and those lobbying groups overwhelmingly supported catastrophic health insurance for the elderly. But senior citizens revolted over its unfair and burdensome financing. In one case, senior citizens even chased Rep. Dan Rostenkowski down the streets of Chicago. The befuddling Washington-insider construction of Clinton's plan, which already leaves many people feeling they'll be paying more for less, could provoke a similar rebellion—and increase support for single payer. One straw in the wind: despite repeated obituaries, the single-payer idea recently got big endorsements in *Newsweek* and in Russell Baker's *New York Times* column.

Wellstone and McDermott intend to push ahead with their legislation, even though they may also urge amendments to Clinton's plan. Single-payer advocates are virtually unanimous in support of making Clinton's financing more progressive and solid, making it easier for states to pursue a single-payer option, eliminating co-payments by patients, and securing more citizen control over health alliances. Young argues that "compromise on the principle of getting the insurance monopolies out of the system is suicidal." But Louise Novotny, a health care economist with the Communications Workers, says that a fight on that principle would not be at the top of reforms the union will pursue.

Whatever balancing act single-payer advocates strike between lauding and criticizing Clinton, between pushing for a Canadian-style system or reforming Clinton's plan and hoping to win more state by state, it is essential that organizing for the single-payer approach accelerate at this point. A public groundswell for the Wellstone-McDermott legislation will send a dual message—in favor of Clinton's announced principles *and* for a more effective way of implementing them. This movement must be prepared to use whatever popular upsurge it creates to shape the best compromise possible.

"It's important not to give up on your idea—unless you didn't believe it in the first place," argues McDermott, a physician-turned-politician. "If you believe, you keep trying to shape things until the game is over. And the game isn't over until the clock runs out. I think organizations should be going on the offense with members who haven't signed [my] bill and getting more co-sponsors.

"This is the Super Bowl of public policy. ... I'm not going to capitulate and say that we can't win the game. I've got 90 members [who co-sponsored the bill] on the field. I think organizations ought to wait and let the president put his plan out and let people discuss it. It's way premature to say the game's over." ◀

# Hawaii: A test case for the Clinton plan

**When the Clinton family stopped over in Hawaii for a little R & R after the recent economic summit in Tokyo, Hillary Rodham Clinton took the opportunity to praise the state's efforts to provide health insurance to all its citizens. Hawaii requires all employers, regardless of size, to pay up to 1.5 percent of payroll for employees' health insurance costs. The Clinton plan features a similar "employer mandate," so Hawaii's record is an important debating point for the administration.**

**Mrs. Clinton praised Hawaii for doing a good job "covering almost everyone" in the the state. Likewise, the *New York Times* routinely reports uncritically that all but 1 or 2 percent of Hawaii's residents have some form of insurance coverage. But according to a report issued by Harvard's Center for National Health Program Studies, the actual figure for those uninsured in Hawaii is 7 percent. The report, entitled "The Growing Epidemic of Uninsurance," is co-sponsored by Physicians for a National Health Program and the Public Citizen Health Research group. Hawaii does have the best coverage record of any state, the report found, but Connecticut, North Dakota and Pennsylvania are within 1 percent of Hawaii's record for coverage. If Hawaii's "near-universal" health program were extended to the whole country, more than 17 million Americans would still lack coverage.**

**Indeed, the state's mixed success with a Clinton-style program may explain why three-quarters of Hawaii's congressional delegation supports a single-payer plan for the United States. Reps. Patsy Mink and Neil Abercrombie, along with Sen. Daniel Inouye, are co-sponsors of the Wellstone-McDermott single-payer bill. Inouye has developed his own single-payer proposal.**

**—John Canham-Clyne**



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BLACK AMERICA

# Fight the powerless

*The anti-rap backlash by the black middle class underscores splits in the African-American community.*

By Salim Muwakkil

Rap music is again under siege, but this time it's the black middle class—not white conservatives or irate cops—leading the charge. The call-to-arms was sounded earlier this year when the Rev. Calvin Butts of Harlem's venerable Abyssinian Baptist Church brandished a miniature steamroller in a symbolic protest to crush degrading rap recordings. "It is our Christian moral and social responsibility to speak out against evil forces that are helping to destroy our community," Butts told his cheering congregation.

Following Butts' lead, several other churches around the country launched their own anti-rap campaigns, and the movement has begun spreading to more secular venues. This summer, the National Political Congress of Black Women (NPCBW) formed an entertainment commission specifically to oppose rap's misogynist excesses.

"How come police can rally around and stop [rappers] from singing about cop killers and women can't get them to stop singing about bitches and 'hos'?" asks Jamie Brown, publisher of the magazine *Sister2Sister* and a member of the NPCBW's newly formed commission.

The issue emerged later in the summer during a panel discussion at the annual conference of the National Association of Black Journalists in Houston, when an invited group of rappers provoked a mass walkout by justifying their harsh lyrics with an equally harsh argument. Many of the journalists present at that session have returned to their publications and launched attacks on rap from their privileged perches.

In an August 27 "Editorial Notebook" in the *New York Times*, Brent Staples charged that rap music—particularly the style known as "gangsta rap"—celebrates murder and misogyny. What's more, he argued, the hip-hop culture that spawned the music tends to portray "middle-class normalcy for blacks [as] an inferior state of being." Staples, a black editorial writer at the *Times*, was particularly incensed about middle-class rappers who fabricate violent urban pasts. Such poseurs indulge themselves in a perverse "poverty fetish" and ultimately "pay homage to murder."

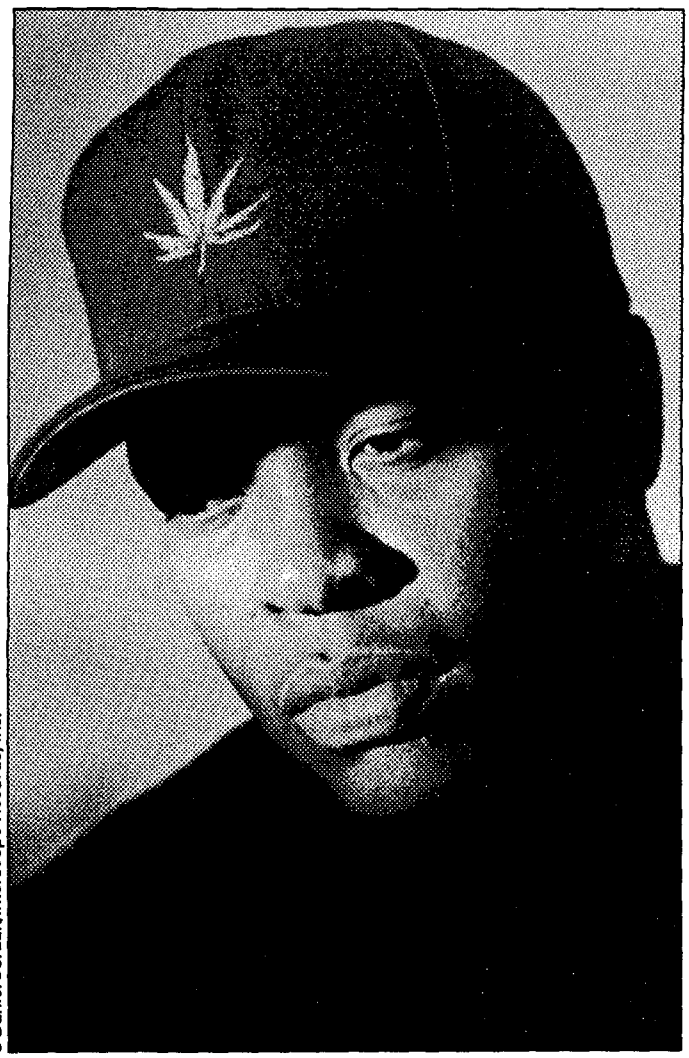
Strong words, indeed. But words that reflect growing class antagonisms within the African-American community. Through the ever shifting lens of hip-hop culture, racial authenticity is increasingly conflated with urban poverty. "I don't run with the bourgeoisie, my crew is much blacker," say rappers Pete Rock and C.L. Smooth, in their song "Soul Brother No. 1."

Rap music has never rung many bells with the black middle class; the genre's ghettocentricity, its boasts and bombast, are culled directly from an inner-city sensibility that many black strivers find repellent. And, although rap has gained considerable intellectual respectability of late—many black scholars speak highly of the genre's creative spirit and several academic works have listed rap high in the historical pantheon of black cultural products—the style remains a hard sell with the buppie set.

But even as it provokes growing protest from African-American social climbers, rap's influence is becoming more pervasive everywhere else. Young people from Europe to the Far East have given hip-hop an enthusiastic embrace. Recordings by the leading rap artists sell better in some countries than virtually any other U.S. cultural export. According to Chuck D (Carleton Ridenhour), the lead vocalist and creative force of the black nationalist-oriented rap group Public Enemy, many countries in which he's per-



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**Dr. Dre**

formed now have radio stations dedicated solely to hip-hop. During a recent lecture at the Art Institute of Chicago, Ridenhour told a packed house that rap music was no longer "the CNN of black America," a widely quoted sobriquet attributed to him. It has now, he said, become the CNN for youth around the world.

That growing eminence has served to mute the objections of many critics who were reluctant to cast aspersions on what had become one of the few success stories to emerge from America's inner cities. However, the rise of gangsta rap, a subgenre of the music that brings a raw focus on the trials and tribulations of life in the underground economy, has eased that reticence. Rappers of the gangsta school pepper their lyrics with liberal doses of misogyny and racial degradation. (See *In These Times*, September 20.)

"Bitches ain't shit but hos and trixx, lick on deez nuts and suck the dick," rap Dr. Dre and company on the multiplatinum recording, *The Chronic*. Another choice lyrical selection from Dre's repertoire is, "Who's the man with the master plan? A nigga with a muthafuckin gun." Dre is a former member of the infamous Compton, Calif., group Niggaz With Attitude (NWA) that put gangsta rap on the map in 1991 when their second album, *Niggaz4Life*, made its debut at No. 1 on *Billboard* magazine's album chart.

And although a tamer gangsta style had been around for a while—originating in the mid-'80s with the Bronx crew called Boogie Down Productions and a rapper named Just-Ice—the profanity-laced California version quickly caught fire. Just as quickly, dollar signs started dancing in the eyes of record company executives. A cacophony of profane voices began dominating the hip-hop scene, and the "explicit lyrics" parental advisory label that once graced only a few rap releases became the rule rather than the exception. The advisory label is now worn with pride; these days, no rapper worth his (or her) salt would release an album without one.

It is the proliferation of lyrical lewdness that has provoked the growing rap backlash. The dimensions of this new antipathy to the music was demonstrated during the Congressional Black Caucus' recently concluded annual legislative meeting, in which several panels focused on the controversies surrounding rap music and hip-hop culture. Many of the outraged critics condemned the entire genre as a menace to society.

For example, a panel discussion with the theme "Challenges to African-American Journalists" dealt heavily with hip-hop culture's portrayals of African-Americans. "We no longer have to worry about the Klan, skinheads or any other groups we have traditionally feared," said panelist Dwight Ellis, a vice president in the predominantly black National Association of Broadcasters. "Our own youth are doing a better job of degrading and destroying our communities."

Ellis' comments were greeted with uncritical assent by panelists William Raspberry and Dorothy Gilliam of the *Washington Post* and Isabel Wilkerson of the *New York Times*, as well as by most of the middle-class audience that had assembled for the discussion. Only Raspberry offered a cautionary note, reminding the fired-up participants not to declare war on the black youth who are immersed in hip-hop culture. "We have to remember that our children are not our enemies," he said.

In many ways, however, this current outcry against rap is the symptom of a deeper division between poor urban youth and middle-class black leadership. Young African-Americans feel little allegiance to the civil rights fraternity or to black preachers like Harlem's Butts. For them, hip-hop is a declaration of generational autonomy and an explicit rejection of the middle-class sensibilities they see as representing a sell-out mentality.

"Young people see no order, no unity, no progress among black leadership," Public Enemy's Ridenhour told the audience at the Art Institute of Chicago, "so they're making their own rules."

In his view, rap music, even gangsta rap, represents black youth asking "a lot of questions and looking for answers." Either we engage them and help them find right answers, he said, or they will find answers on their own. "And we probably won't like what they find." ◄



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THE ECONOMY

# Hard trade-offs

***The issues surrounding NAFTA are not as simple as either its opponents or supporters make them out to be.***

By John B. Judis
WASHINGTON D.C.

Unlike many of my friends and colleagues, I have had difficulty taking a clear and fixed position on the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). When I learn of another factory closing, or hear of an owner using the threat of moving to Mexico to intimidate workers, I hope the agreement goes down in flames. But when I examine the arguments against the treaty, I am not convinced that there is a viable alternative. The United States needs a new economic arrangement with Mexico, and NAFTA may be the best we can do.

Both sides in the debate make diametrically opposed claims about jobs. Some of these are so far apart they are ludicrous. Former U.S. Trade Representative Carla Hills predicted that NAFTA could raise employment as much as 2.5 percent—or 3 million jobs—while Pat Choate's Manufacturing Policy Project estimates that 5.9 million jobs are "at risk" from NAFTA. Most estimates run between losing or gaining about 400,000 jobs in a decade—or .3 percent of the labor force. I accept the position of the Congressional Budget Office—that, barring unforeseen circumstances, overall job growth or loss will be "negligible."

What is more important are the particulars of job loss and growth. The treaty's trade provisions, which eliminate minimal American duties and much larger Mexican ones, will indeed create some jobs in the United States. Computer and software makers are among those who will benefit immediately from lower duties.

But the treaty's extensive investment provisions will encourage American companies to move to Mexico—which will eliminate U.S. jobs. Some of these jobs would have been lost anyway, as American companies moved them to other low-wage Third World countries. But the proximity of Mexico and the treaty's guarantees against expropriation by the Mexican government will inspire companies that wouldn't otherwise move.

Still, American foreign investment in Mexico is not an unmitigated evil, even if it leads to job loss in the United States. Mexico is not Thailand, but a border state whose economy is intertwined with our own. The United States needs a prosperous Mexico, particularly if the world economy devolves into competing regional blocs. NAFTA may not be the best way to create one, but it is the only approach that the Mexican government or American public will tolerate.

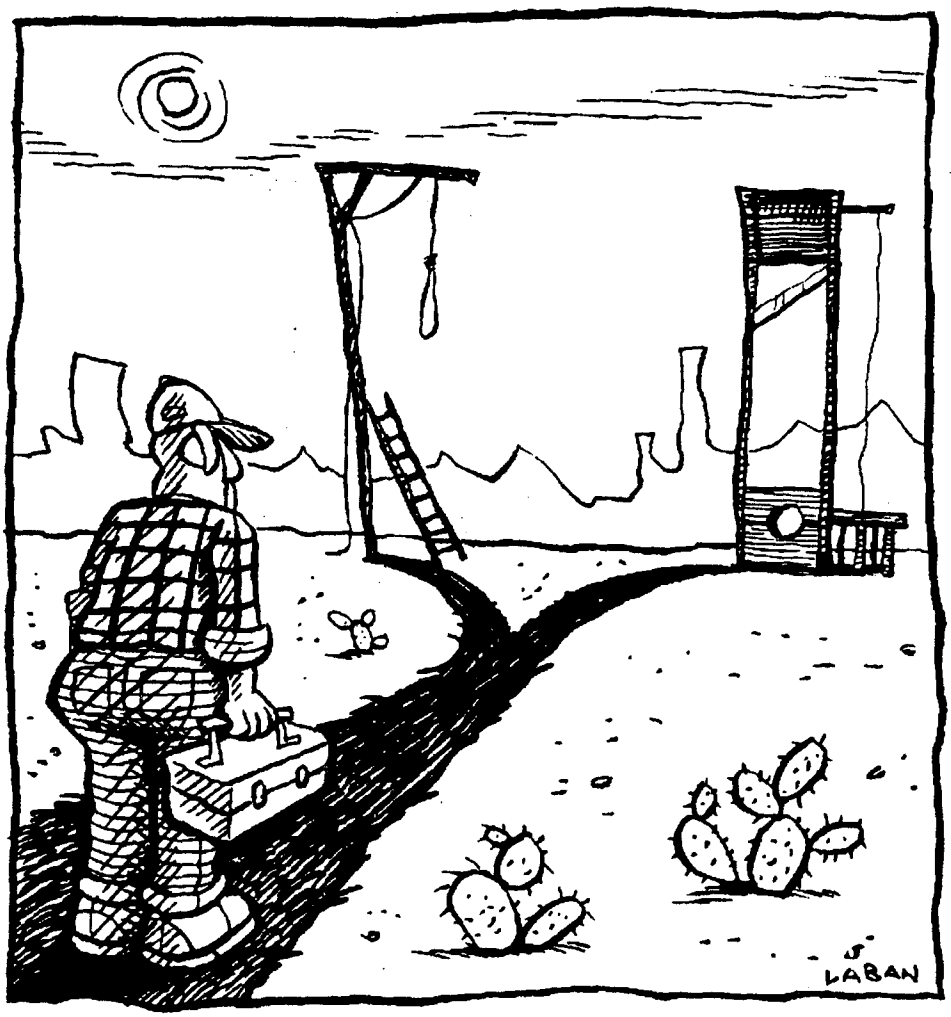
Treaty critics hold up the example of the way that the European Economic Community (EEC) dealt with Spain, Portugal and Greece, giving them $120 billion in development aid to prepare them for entry into the EEC. But American taxpayers would not tolerate pumping $30 or $40 billion of foreign aid into Mexico when domestic programs are being cut. The only way for Mexico to develop is through voluntary transfers of private capital.

Some of the foreign investment provisions will also aid American business in competing against its foreign trade rivals. American negotiators put "rules of origin" provisions in the treaty that require companies that export from Mexico to the United States to produce goods that have 60 percent or more North American content. That means the Japanese or Koreans will no longer be able to ship automobile engines and television tubes to Mexico, assemble them into cars and televisions, and export them duty-free to the United States. They might even be forced to build or buy some of these high-technology components in the U.S.

Clinton's side agreements on labor are admittedly lame (see *In These Times*, September 6), but the commissions on



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labor and the environment establish an important precedent for regulating trade and investment among the United States, Mexico and Canada. Their existence is an acknowledgment of exactly what Ross Perot and Pat Buchanan refuse to accept: that insofar as the United States, Canada and Mexico are interdependent economies, the countries need some supranational bodies to regulate them.

Those are the good points, but the treaty and the side agreements also have extremely serious defects that could have been partially remedied. The labor side agreements exclude workers' rights to bargain and strike; and even complaints about child labor and worker health and safety will only be adjudicated if two of the three NAFTA nations agree to investigate them. By contrast, two of the three countries have to exercise a veto in order to halt the investigation of an environmental complaint.

House Majority Leader Richard Gephardt (D-MO) and other NAFTA critics wanted the Clinton administration to get the Mexicans to agree to tie their wages to productivity increases. What they might have gotten—indicated by Mexican President Carlos Salinas' unilateral pledge after the agreements were signed—is a commitment to tying the minimum wage to productivity. That would have benefited American and Canadian workers as well.

The treaty also lacks any funding for U.S. communities and workers devastated when companies move operations to Mexico. Rep. Esteban Torres (D-CA) proposed a North American Development Bank (NADBANK) that the United States, Mexico and Canada would capitalize for $1 billion—the U.S. share would be $600 million over five years. Torres' NADBANK would have financed business development and worker retraining in communities hurt by NAFTA. The administration stiffed him. Instead, it directed its funds entirely at environmental cleanup.

Why did Clinton ignore Gephardt and Torres? It was partly inadvertence and incompetence. During the months of budget battles, Clinton ceded control of NAFTA negotiations to an interagency committee, chaired by Bowman Cutter of the National Economic Council. Cutter, a former investment banker, was far more worried about maintaining Republican and business support for NAFTA than attracting swing Democrats. One administration consultant on NAFTA told me that Cutter and other administration officials figured that Gephardt and Torres would eventually support the agreement anyway.

But the administration's strategy on NAFTA also reflects Clinton's brand of Wall Street liberalism. Almost every special interest in the country—bird watchers to software publishers—got something out of NAFTA. Everyone, that is, except for potentially displaced American workers. Clinton, it turns out, is good on endangered species, but not on endangered workers.

NAFTA is a very close call. Voting the treaty down would have one very beneficial effect: it would put those in the nation's foreign policy establishment on notice that they could no longer make trade policy behind closed doors. It would also let them know that whatever arrangements they make will have to consider the impact on American workers.

But the effect of the treaty's defeat on U.S.-Mexican economic relations is harder to predict. The treaty probably would not be renegotiated during the next two or even six years. Clinton would be too preoccupied with his other ini-



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tiatives and also too weakened by the treaty's defeat. And Mexico will hold elections for a new government next year. Assuming, then, that negotiations would halt, one can anticipate two possible outcomes.

One outcome, which would be beneficial to both the United States and Mexico, is that Mexico would undergo democratic reform and would begin to enforce its labor and environmental laws. In that case, voting down NAFTA would turn out to be good for both countries.

The other outcome is that Mexico would continue its practice of liberalizing trade and foreign investment and ignoring worker rights and environmental regulation. In that case, the United States would come out significantly worse than it would have under NAFTA. American plants would continue to move to Mexico, eliminating American jobs and putting downward pressure on wages. Asian and European manufacturers would continue to build assembly plants that take advantage of Mexico's low wages and the United States' minimal duties. And illegal immigration to the United States, fueled by agricultural deregulation, would accelerate.

Unfortunately, I believe that this latter outcome is much more likely. The forces for reform in Mexico seem few and weak and will not be strengthened by the shock that NAFTA's defeat will deliver. This leads me to believe that passing this treaty—if accompanied by funding for NADBANK and worker retraining—is slightly better than defeating it. But only very slightly better. ◀


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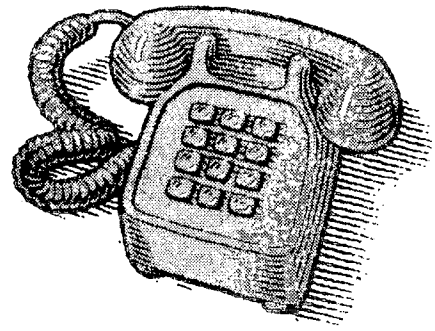
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VIEWPOINT

# Is it third party time?

**By Joel Rogers**

It's old news that most Americans are dissatisfied with current national politics. What's new is that more than a third of registered voters now say they would vote for a third-party alternative to the Republicans and the Democrats. This dissenting third of the electorate wants a party that will "clean up government," "save our jobs" and "save our country for our children." They strongly support radical campaign finance and other "pro-democracy" reforms to give citizens a direct say in government, more nationalist and directive trade and industrial policies to improve working-class jobs, and much more government accountability in the stewardship of public resources.

These are, of course, precisely the issues that Ross Perot has been hammering on for more than a year, with obvious popular resonance. What makes them truly explosive, however, is that they are almost impossible to address within our current two-party system.

Radical campaign finance reform? Both major parties are less parties than collections of permanent candidates, literally addicted to the private money that regularly returns them to office. Class-based economic nationalism? At the leadership level, both major parties are dominated by big business interests unwilling to accept constraints on their trade or investment options. Accountability in government? Our two-and-only-two-party system is almost designed to limit accountability. With as much variation within the parties as between them (look at Michigan Rep. David Bonior and President Clinton duking it out on NAFTA), they are not even accountable to themselves.

The inability of the two-party system to respond to such concerns has thus opened a large and potentially stable market for third-party politics. The question is who will tap into it.

Ross Perot could, but at the moment he doesn't want to. Perot has discouraged his supporters from forming a third party. He has devoted his energies instead to building United We Stand, a giant civic association. With millions of dues-paying members, United We Stand is already a phenomenon. But it's not a political party.

***One-third of American voters say they would abandon the Democrats and Republicans and jump to a third party.***

Without Perot's billions, though, other groups have been trying to build such a party. They face enormous barriers—a lack of money, a determinedly hostile legal environment and winner-take-all election rules that usually render votes for minor parties "wasted."

But at least one of them—the New Party, with which I am associated—is making some steady progress. The New Party is a grass-roots-based, membership-run, progressive party, with values heavily overlapping those of the "dissenting third." We hope one day to be the new majority party of the United States. Here's how we're getting to that distant point.

**We never "waste" our members' votes.** The New Party supports candidates only where we know we are truly competitive. At the moment, that means local elections—county supervisor seats, school boards, city councils, the occasional state assembly race. Last year, in Wisconsin, Missouri and Arkansas, we won 20 of 28 such elections. This fall, in Michigan, Montana, New Jersey and New York, we expect more success. Next year, maybe, a congressional seat or two. But we only invest our energy where we have the capacity to win.

**We're reviving "fusion."** Where we are not yet competitive, we stay out of the elections entirely and endorse the more progressive of the mainstream candidates—or, where the law permits, nominate that candidate on our own ballot line. This last option, known as "plural nomination" or "fusion," lets our members participate in mainstream politics while showing their support for us. They vote for Democrat Smith or Republican Jones, and their vote counts, but they also send



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them a message, showing them where their support comes from by voting for them on the New Party line. Having the fusion option expands voter choice and strengthens third parties. This is why major parties have widely banned the practice, which used to be universal in the United States. We're fighting to bring it back.

**We serve our base.** We serve as a shared point of contact for activist groups that share our values and support our candidates. We support those groups directly in local struggles—strikes, fair housing campaigns, school reform efforts, abortion clinic defenses—that involve our members. And we engage in a range of educational and recreational activities to build an active, informed membership. All this helps to connect our members to each other, to connect our elected officials to members and to make it possible to put that base in motion in support of our officials once they are elected.

**We are down for democracy.** America's ills are the ills of a society that no longer trusts its citizens with real power. We favor giving all Americans a "democratic tool kit" of rights, remedies and organizational resources for use in their roles as citizen/voters, workers, consumers, taxpayers and shareholders. Public funding of elections, and universal rights to recall, referendum and initiative, are good places to start this democratic revolution, which we're taking to the states.

Will this broad strategy succeed in moving us forward? Certainly. Will it reach all of the "dissenting third" tomorrow? Certainly not. Might $100 million ($10 million, $5 million) help speed that along? Sure, but we don't have it. Is it third party time in America? Stay tuned. ◀

**Joel Rogers** chairs the New Party's Interim Executive Council. This article is taken in part from an address to the recent convention of the American Political Science Association in Washington.

*For more information, contact the New Party, 227 West 40th, #1303, New York, NY 10018, (212) 302-5053.*


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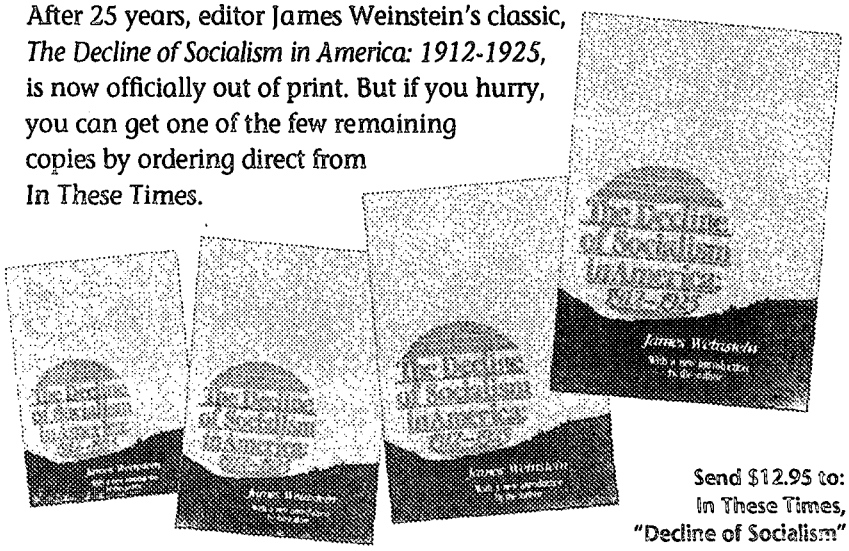
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IN THE ARTS

# Class acts

***Two superb films explore the meaning of money in American society.***

By Pat Dowell

Neither *The Age of Innocence* nor *King of the Hill* is a true product of Hollywood. Martin Scorsese is as much a New Yorker as Woody Allen, and Steven Soderbergh is an independent filmmaker who lives in Charlottesville, Va.

Both of the directors use the resources of Hollywood, and go bobbing for stars in its talent pool, but they haven't buried themselves in the movie industry's company town. That fact helps to account, I suspect, for the startling maturity of their latest films—each in its own way one of the year's best.

You might say both movies address the same subject—the meaning of money in American life. Soderbergh's *King of the Hill*, as befits its characters' circumstances, is a modestly scaled and intimate drama set in Depression-era St. Louis. The title character is the school marble champ, a 12-year-old boy whose childhood is slipping silently away as his family tries desperately to halt their fall out of the middle class.

Scorsese's *The Age of Innocence*, on the other hand, is a $40 million romantic tragedy set among the wealthiest New Yorkers of the 1870s—a glacial world, devoted to making any sort of fall unthinkable, even falling in love. One of the denizens of this world, Newland Archer, a successful young lawyer played by Daniel Day-Lewis, tries to thaw out in the arms of an almost liberated Countess Ellen Olenska (Michelle Pfeiffer), but just gets permanent frostbite.

In adapting Edith Wharton's 1920 novel, Scorsese and Jay Cocks have emphasized the extent to which the manners of the age are at heart rituals for preserving the carefully arranged possessions that wealth has bought. The Victorians did such a good job of dusting and polishing that his production designers and researchers have found countless authentic objects of the era to use as props. They researched the etiquette, the fabrics, the laces, the ballrooms, the furniture, the summer homes—and so the movie displays in smothering detail the fixtures of wealth.

To say it's a pretty picture is an understatement. Shot by Michael Ballhaus, it's an eye-popping vision that constantly flashes closeups of pens, jewels, gloves, cards, silverware, china, paintings and other priceless possessions that define an age of anything but innocence. Scorsese puts the signature of wealth—its purchases, its conspicuous consumption—on a par with the film's characters, who are happily thoughtless and inert, like their treasures.

One exception is Archer. He is happily engaged to May (Winona Ryder), a beauty whose corset seems to have strangled her mind. Yet he can't resist the feelings stirred in him by his fiancée's cousin, Countess Olenska, a woman who has left her European husband and come looking for refuge among her family in New York. High society doesn't know what to make of her, so it concentrates on making her go away.

Archer's passion for the countess never comes



**The Age of Innocence**
Directed by Martin Scorsese

**King of the Hill**
Directed by Steven Soderbergh



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to more than a hug and a kiss, in part because he doesn't understand the nature of his participation in the society of wealth. He imagines it is voluntary, that he controls his own destiny. In point of fact, both Archer and Olenska have underestimated their "tribe," as Wharton called their milieu in her novel.

Smiling all the way, with never a direct reference to the couple and nary a rude word, their families and friends close in on the pair at a final dinner party, where the true shape of his world becomes apparent to Archer. He discovers that his place in the culture is as carefully laid out as the 13 courses on the table, which Scorsese has pointedly shown us in more detail and urgency than any of the supporting characters.

This cold eye on wealth will probably not be the reason most people go to see *The Age of Innocence*. Americans love to enjoy the lifestyles of the rich and famous, even those of long ago—preferably long ago—and we love to see how they suffer in spite of their privilege, and perhaps even because of it.



Photos by Phillip Caruso

Daniel Day-Lewis and Michelle Pfeiffer in *The Age of Innocence*.

Those 13-course dinners in *The Age of Innocence* certainly would look tasty to Aaron Kurlander (Jesse Bradford), the young protagonist of *King of the Hill*. At his lowest point, Aaron is reduced to cutting out magazine photos of food and arranging them on a plate for dinner.

Aaron is an imaginative kid, first glimpsed at school, reading aloud a story he's written about advising Charles Lindbergh on airplane food. As the school year turns into summer, the boy is stripped of all that sustains him. Aaron's mother sends his adoring little brother to be fed by relatives, then she herself is packed off to a hospital for tuberculosis.

His father—full of scary affection, thanks to Jeroen Krabbe's complex performance—takes the only job he can get and leaves town. Aaron is left to prowl the unwelcoming halls of the Empire, a transient hotel, one step ahead of the surly bellhop who padlocks doors whenever he sees a deadbeat leave.

Soderbergh doesn't pretty up the Depression. Hoovervilles look mighty mean, and come down in a hail of blows from cops and goons. Adapting the memoirs of A. E. Hotchner, Soderbergh creates as exacting a portrait of his movie's era as does Scorsese, and in just as much detail. No Depression movie has ever looked so plain, so worn, so desolate, its decor so scrimped and saved for by anxious hands. Soderbergh finds a kind of poetry of the ordinary. In *King of the Hill*, Aaron learns the value of things.

It's an inspiriting film, and not just because the Kurlanders finally get a foothold on the middle class again. What Soderbergh celebrates is resilience and ingenuity and communion as the sources of survival.

This movie's portrait of hard times getting harder may seem too close to home for moviegoers these days. Though experts tell us every evening that our current troubles are nowhere near as serious as the Great Depression, I imagine the truth of that depends on just how deep in it you already are. *King of the Hill* probably sounds depressing in that light, but it is not. *The Age of Innocence*, however, is about dying the American death, a lifelong subservience to the lifestyle to which we have become accustomed. Now that's a downer.



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IN PRINT

# Empire on my mind

**By James North**

Those who know Edward Said primarily through his sharp polemical articles on behalf of the Third World generally and his fellow Palestinians in particular may be surprised by this book. Here, the tone is not argumentative but genuinely inquisitive. Said does have views, strong views, about the connections, sometimes subtle, between Western culture and imperial domination, and about the oppositional culture that has arisen in the Third World in response. He takes certain Western classics, such as Jane Austen's *Mansfield Park*, Verdi's opera *Aida* and the novels of Rudyard Kipling, Joseph Conrad and Albert Camus, and interprets them against the reality of Western colonizers, sugar plantation owners and counterinsurgency colonels.

But Said avoids the simple reductionism that dismisses Western culture as mere camouflage for slave-trading. Said, who is after all a distinguished specialist in comparative literature at Columbia, insists, by contrast, that great art has autonomous value—that, as he puts it, "for all their social presence, novels are not reducible to a sociological current and cannot be done justice to aesthetically, culturally and politically as subsidiary forms of class, ideology or interest."

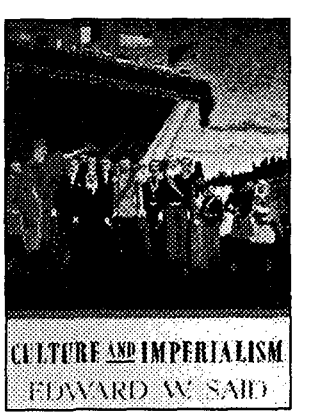
*Culture and Imperialism* takes up three broad themes. In the early portions of the book, Said argues that Western culture, and even Western high art, is more closely connected to imperialism than is usually recognized. Next, he looks closely at the oppositional culture that emerged in the Third World itself, at important figures like Frantz Fanon and the black Caribbean writer C.L.R. James, who tried to hold the West up to its own professed humanistic standards. Finally, and persuasively, he uses the cultural arguments around the 1991 Gulf War to show that the culture of imperialism is far from dead, that it has assumed new forms—more subtle, perhaps, than its 19th-century incarnation, but no less pernicious.

In making his case, Said does not settle for the easy targets. It is not hard to find jingoism and racism in the popular culture, which formed part of the structure of feeling that explained and justified the West's dominion over most of the rest of the globe. But Said does not linger long on the crude pamphlets and the yellow press. Instead, he takes up major works of culture, works that he himself respects for their artistic value.

In some cases the works he studies have a direct and obvious relation to his themes. The Algerian-born French writer Albert Camus, for instance, was torn with ambivalence during the Algerian war for independence; Said, following Conor Cruise O'Brien, has little difficulty showing that Camus' confusion shows through in novels like *The Stranger* and *The Plague*, which are allegories about Europe that are revealingly set in Algeria. Even *The Fall*, in which the protagonist never leaves a clammy Amsterdam bar, includes the moral doubts and evasions that Camus himself must have felt as French paratroopers continued to kill hundreds of thousands of Algerians to hold onto their colony while he vacillated.

But Jane Austen is another matter. *Mansfield Park* mentions in passing Sir Thomas Bertram's sugar plantation in the Caribbean, which provides the material basis for the upper-middle-class social maneuverings in English country houses. Said acknowledges that the book contains "at most a half dozen references" to Antigua, and detractors might imagine that here he is going too far, that he is using what is merely incidental background information to wrench the novel into his interpretive framework—rather like insisting that *Huckleberry Finn* is in essence an anti-royalist tract because two "royalist" frauds, the "King" and the "Duke," make cameo appearances.

Said's argument is more subtle than this. He shows that Sir Thomas' return from Antigua, far from being simply an incidental detail, is in fact a pivotal event in the novel, which allows him to restore order at home, in much the same way as he maintains order on his plantation. Said contends that Austen "synchronizes domestic with international authority, making it plain that the values associated with such higher things as ordination, law and propriety must be grounded firmly in actual rule over and possession of territory."




**Culture and Imperialism**
By Edward W. Said
Knopf
380 pp., $25

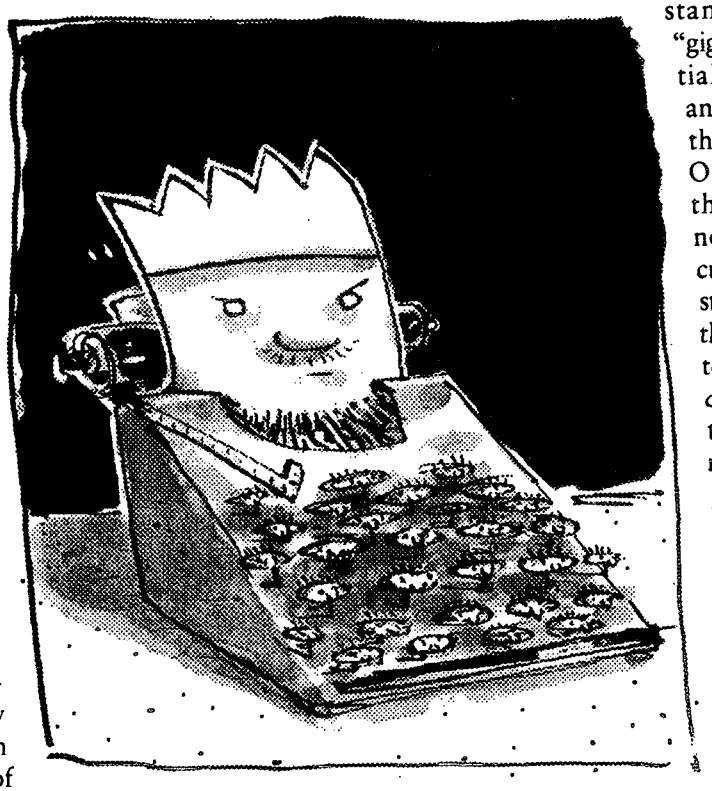
His interpretation of Austen, while suggestive, is still not totally proven. But it does provide strong evidence that imperialism must have been a more powerful presence in Western culture than is usually assumed—so much so that even artists like Austen felt



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compelled to explain, justify, come to terms with or evade its central reality, in ways not always immediately obvious.

This pattern of intellectual evasion may seem painfully natural to us today, but there is no reason cultural history should have followed this path of silence. Why didn't more 19th-century humanitarians and humanists go beyond opposing the slave trade and say straight out that it was wrong to conquer other people, to machine-gun them when they resisted, to exploit them economically, to impose your own way of life on them and tell them it was for their own good?



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Once the Third World did begin to resist, some in the West started to listen. Said is excellent on the modern intellectual history of the Third World—whether by bringing to our attention important thinkers barely known in the West, such as George Antonius and S. H. Alatas, author of the remarkable *The Myth of the Lazy Native*, or by asking us to take seriously a figure like Frantz Fanon, caricatured in more recent times as merely a homicidal lunatic.

The point is not to celebrate a largely decorative "multiculturalism," using Third World history as a supplement to, or correction of, the First World's story. One of Said's most persuasive arguments is that the history of the North and the South have been entwined for centuries. "If," he writes, "French and Algerian or Vietnamese history, Caribbean or African or Indian and British history are studied separately rather than together, then the experiences of domination and being dominated remain artificially, and falsely, separated." The Western conquest of the Third World was not some marginal episode, but a central reality for both conquerors and conquered.

*Culture and Imperialism* can be difficult at times. Said's writing is often choppy, tentative and repetitive. Names are dropped and lines of inquiry are mentioned but not followed up. These are not really flaws, though, but inherent in the nature of the work, which is meant more as a prod to further thinking than as the last word on the subject. Said is building on the brilliant success of his groundbreaking book *Orientalism*, which showed how Western "Orientalists" constructed an "East" that was reduced to a romantic, exotic "Other"—with essential, ingrained characteristics that (not by chance) permitted, and even encouraged, guidance by colonialists. *Orientalism* also rambled along in fits and starts, but it has, since its publication in 1978, spawned a large, growing and valuable literature.

Said ends *Culture and Imperialism* with a passionate discussion of the recent Gulf War, written from the position of "an American and Arab who lived in both worlds." The war seems like a bad dream today, but Said reminds us of the vast array of televised pundits and instant experts eager to proffer abstract explanations of "the Arab mind," reducing the complex conflict to a standoff between the "gigantic caricatural essentializations" of "Islam" and the "West." Despite the endless barrage of Orientalist expertise in the mass media, Said notes that "[n]o major cultural group was (and still is) as little known [as the Arabs]: if one were to ask an American *au courant* with recent fiction or poetry for the name of an Arab writer, probably the only one to come up would still be Kahlil Gibran."

Yet here again, Said's treatment is sober and balanced. With genuine anguish, he analyzes more subtle events, such as a debate in December 1990, before the fighting started, on the *MacNeil/Lehrer NewsHour* between the liberal columnist Anthony Lewis of the *New York Times* and the more conservative Karen Elliot House of the *Wall Street Journal*.

Said found the debate "depressing" because both antagonists were "considerable people, neither predictable hawks." But both of them used the imperial "we" to mean "Americans," and talked about military force as something for "us" to "deploy, use and withdraw appropriately." "Rarely in the debate," Said writes, "was there mention of the Arabs as having something to do with the war, as its victims, for instance, or (equally convincingly) its instigators ... The impending conflagration ... was distant, and ... except for the (very few) arriving body bags and bereaved families, Americans were largely spared. The abstract quality imparted coldness and cruelty to the situation." By this stage in his book, Said has so effectively shown the complex structures of feeling and evasion that you can understand how even a debate like this one, on the surface so civilized, could help to pave the way for the barbarism of war. ◀

**James North**, the author of *Freedom Rising* (Macmillan), writes regularly on the Third World for *In These Times*.



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# Breaking the silence

## By Fred Halliday

In March 1991, days after the withdrawal and defeat of the Iraqi army in Kuwait, an uprising, or *intifada*, broke out inside of Iraq. Whereas the Iraqi people had, contrary to the expectations of many, stood by the Ba'ath regime in the eight-year war with Iran, the second Gulf War sparked revolts, in both the Shi'ite south and the Kurdish north, in which probably four times as many people were killed as in the war over Kuwait itself. In this powerful, multifaceted and often shocking book Kanan Makiya—a prominent Iraqi dissident and the author, under the name Samir al-Khalil, of *Republic of Fear*—traces the course of this uprising with sympathy and understanding.

Makiya tells the story of the uprising through the words of its participants: tracing the first spontaneous revolt of tank crews in the main square of Basra; the equally spontaneous revolt by young people in the Shi'ite cities; the mutiny by the formerly pro-regime Kurdish units in the north; the sacking of party offices and secret police headquarters; the rage of a people who, in the space of a few days or even hours, broke the barrier of fear that had held them down for two decades. Makiya repeats the argument he made at the time: that the U.S., having inflicted this defeat on Iraq and having so disrupted the infrastructure of the country, should have marched on Baghdad and deposed the regime. Iraqis appealed for American help, but in vain.

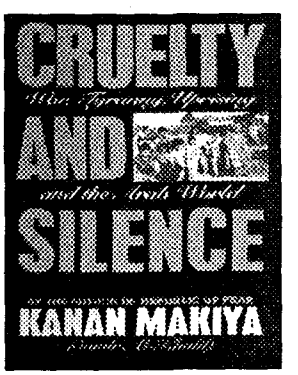
Though sympathetic to their aims, Makiya is unsparing in his criticism of the crimes and mistakes of the insurgents, who tortured and butchered many of the government officials they captured. He also shows how the religious sectarianism of the rebels in the south alienated both the Sunnis—on whom any successful challenge to the regime must rely—and also the Kurds in the north. Makiya argues that there will be no hope for Iraq unless this sectarianism is overcome.

The force of Makiya's analysis lies in the details he presents of political terror, from above and below, and in the first-hand picture he gives of life in the Iraq of Saddam Hussein, a graphic story that complements the analysis of his earlier *Republic of Fear*. But, as the title of his new book suggests, there is another theme here—that of the reaction, or lack of reaction, of much of the Arab world to the crimes of the Ba'athist regime against its own people, and of the broader collusion of much of the Arab intelligentsia with the regime. Makiya rejects the conventions of simplistic solidarity by not asking for a choice—either the "Arabs" or the "Kurds," the "Israelis" or the "Palestinians." He is clear in his denunciation of Israeli policy on Palestine but, as he shows, support for this consensual "Arab" cause has frequently gone together with silence on many other crimes in the region—from indulgence of Saddam to sycophancy toward the house of Saud.

Yet it would be a mistake to see this collusion, or the cruelties Makiya writes of, as uniquely Arab problems. The cruelties he denounces in Iraq have had their counterparts, or worse, in other countries: in Nazi Germany, in Stalin's camps, in Cambodia.

These cruelties, too, have had their defenders: rapturous followers of Mao, Stalin's fellow travelers, those artists and architects who served Hitler and Ceausescu. In this sense, in his pertinent critique of the Arab intelligentsia and in the urge to unmask their corruptions, Makiya reproduces the myth of Arab uniqueness, one found as often among racist critics of the Arab world as among nationalist demagogues.

Central to the culture of corruption Makiya describes is its persecution of dissidents. Makiya has been vilified for his earlier book, and this one will no doubt provoke a new round of attacks. The pro-Iraqi press has long accused him of being in the pay of the Americans; others, out of a misplaced sense of anti-imperialism, are quick to charge that he has betrayed the Arab cause, and in particular the Palestinian one, by denouncing the Iraqi regime.




**Cruelty and Silence: War, Tyranny, Uprising and the Arab World**
By Kanan Makiya
Norton
367 pp., $22.95

The treatment of Makiya goes to the heart of a question that perpetually troubles all those who have written on Third World struggles over the past few decades: the question of the degree to which solidarity with the victims of imperialism and other related forms of oppression should lead to silence on other questions that may qualify, or complicate, this support. This question bedevils all those who have written of Indochina, Cuba, El Salvador—the list goes on. One would hope that the least that has been learned is the need to speak the truth.

Further arousing his critics has been Makiya's treatment, in this as in his previous work, of the issue of imperialism's impact on the Middle East. He in no way denies the effects of outside intervention, but he complicates the issues by examining the ways in which political forces inside these



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countries have compounded the impact of external oppression by their own policies and crimes. It is no reply to this argument to repeat, as his critics too often do, that imperialism has much to answer for, to accuse him of being an apologist of imperialism just for raising the issue.

Since the publication of this book, Makiya has become embroiled in a needlessly bitter public wrangle with Edward Said, out of which neither has emerged with credit. Said's response to Makiya's criticism (as in his interventions in *Middle East Report*) has been intemperate—and wrongly contemptuous of Makiya's quite sensible decision to write his first two books under a pseudonym. But Makiya himself overstates his case. Said's immediate response to the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait was cautious (and arguably mistaken), but he did not, as Makiya claims, endorse the myths of nationalism as many others did.

Yet it is a sort of ironic confirmation of Makiya's argument that Said, too, has faced not only the rancor of pro-Israeli propagandists but, from Arab intellectuals, the same kinds of criticism and threats to which Makiya has been subjected, precisely for stepping out of line. Both Makiya and Said have challenged predominant nationalist myths—not in spite of but precisely *because* of their commitment to the peoples they have come from.

The mechanisms for controlling such dissidents are of course well known, and are in no way specific to the Arabs: the charge of being "un-American" or "anti-Soviet," of being a "self-hating Jew." When intellectuals of this kind do challenge the myths of their own nations, others, eager for the approval of power and clique, rush in to accuse them of losing touch with their "roots"—as if "roots" can be so simply and unequivocally defined, as if departure from roots is necessarily reprehensible.

This is one of the leitmotifs of the ill-considered *Nation* review of Makiya by my old colleague Eqbal Ahmad. (See *The Nation*, Aug. 9, 1993.) It fails to address the main issue Makiya is analyzing, namely the nature of the Saddam Hussein regime, and falls back on abuse. The review's concluding appeal to community and roots, to "traditional Muslim values," comes strangely from someone immersed in the politics of the Indian subcontinent; it is, of course, the first resort of the communal politician. And as Ahmad knows full well, it is a charge that could—with equal injustice—be leveled at himself.

The main issue about Makiya's book is not whether he is fair to this or that Arab intellectual, or whether readers disagree with his analysis of imperialism: these are issues on which legitimate and reasonable debate are possible. It is, rather, what kind of political regime has been visited upon the people of Iraq—once the leaders of Arab nationalism and Arab culture, and possessed of perhaps the best natural endowment of any Arab state. The story Makiya tells is, first and foremost, that of the Iraqi people—Arab as well as Kurd—and in telling it he has made a major contribution to our understanding of the contemporary Middle East.

To escape the despair, the stunned silence, that reading this book induces, one can only look to the future, to an Iraq freed of Ba'athist terror. One of the greatest crimes of the Kuwait crisis—to which both Saddam Hussein and his opponents contributed—was the way in which it obscured the Iraqi people, their history and culture, their heroism in the face of enemies without and within. As Makiya writes: "There is no grievance, no idea, no creed, no religion, no belief, no god worth asserting if it entails taking one more Iraqi life." ◁

**Fred Halliday** is the author of numerous books on international politics, including *From Kabul to Managua* (Pantheon) and *Revolution and Foreign Policy: The Case of South Yemen* (Cambridge University Press).



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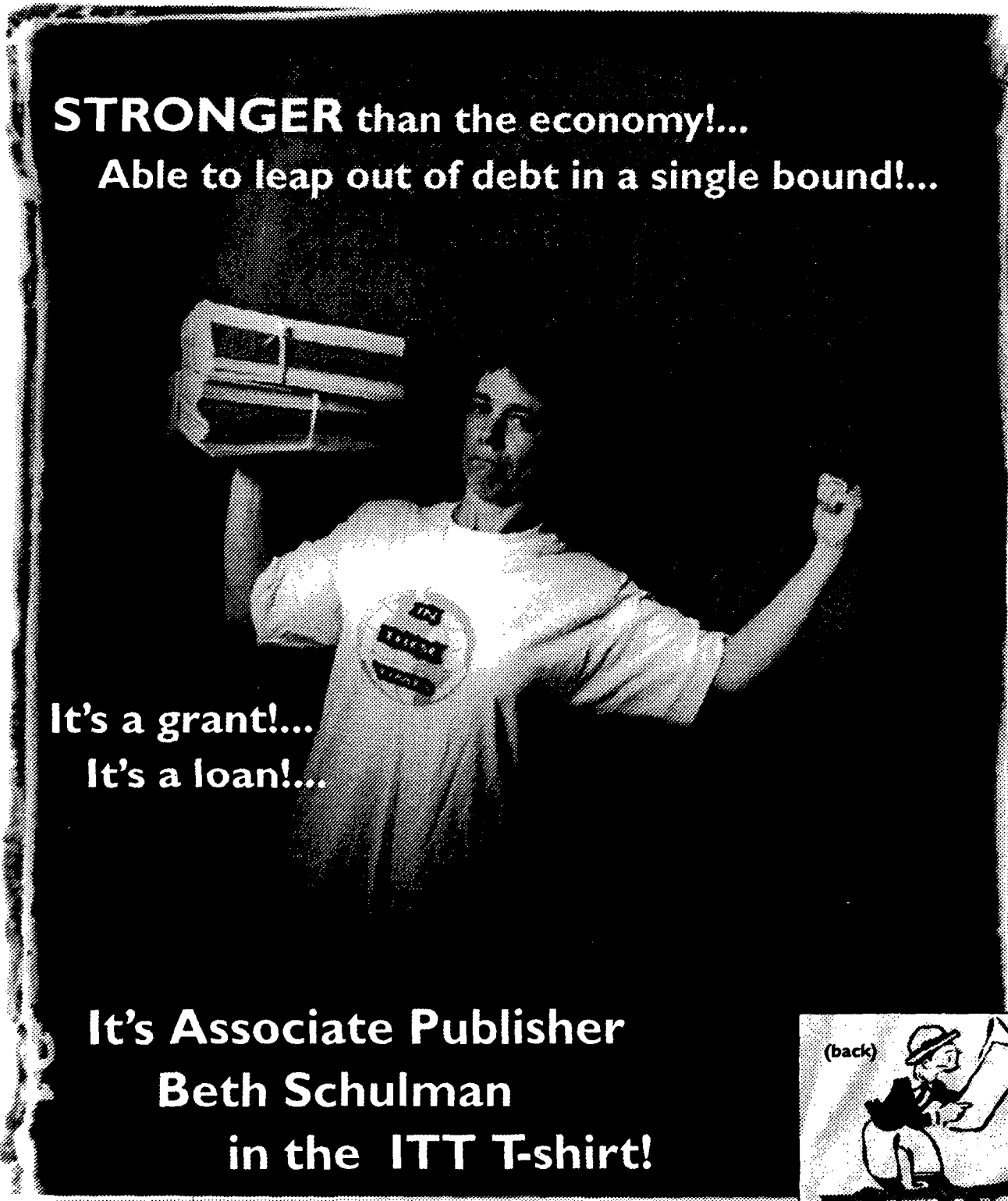



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# CLASSIFIEDS

## ▷ HELP WANTED

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NARAL seeking Field Manager for Midwest region. Grassroots skills and commitment to reproductive rights a must. Call (202) 973-3093 for job description.

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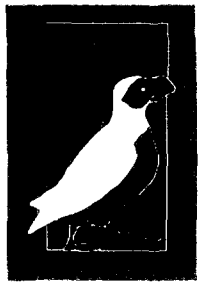
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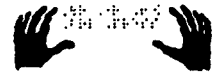
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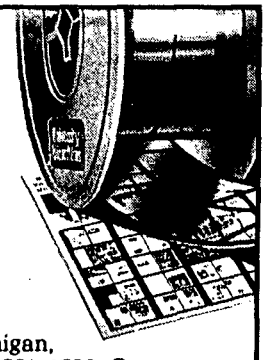
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*Continued from page 15*

solution to the Israeli/Palestinian problem will come not through the reconciliation of ancient or traditional antagonisms but through the recognition that both Israelis and Palestinians are entitled to what other peoples have—neither more nor less. Such a recognition would free us all from the mire of historical retrospection.

We can only hope that the Washington agreement will pave the way for such a recognition. The Arab-Israeli dispute does not deserve its aura of historical mystique. But if its mystique can be turned to exemplary purposes, enabling others to free themselves of the self-justifications of ancient and often invented history, then this aura will have served its purpose. ◀

Fred **Halliday** is the author of numerous books on international politics, including *From Kabul to Managua* (Pantheon) and *Revolution and Foreign Policy: The Case of South Yemen* (Cambridge University Press). He teaches at the London School of Economics.


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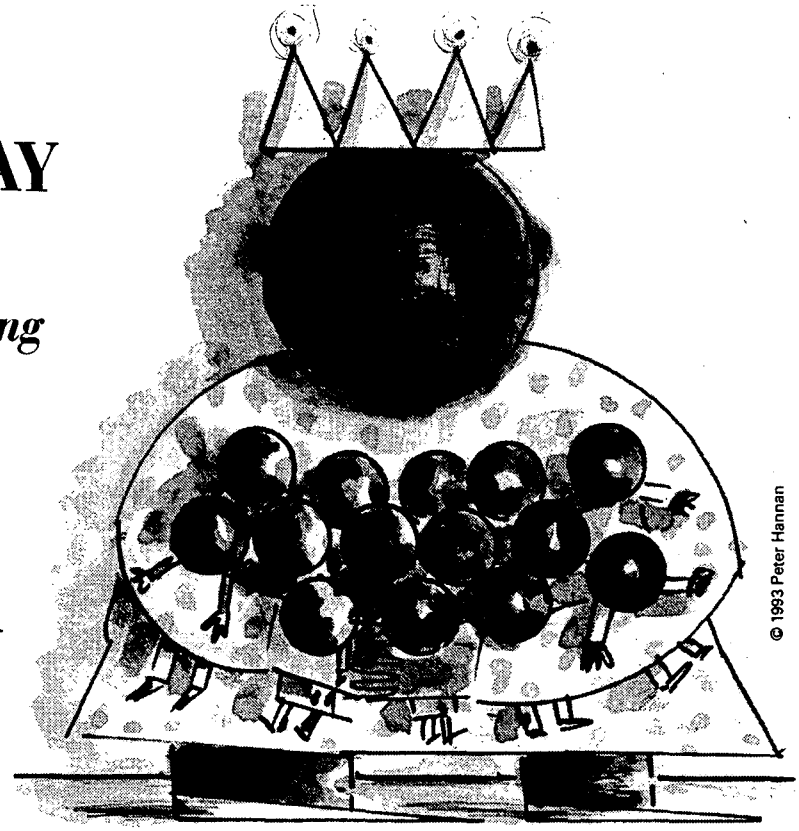

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IN THE END

# QUEEN FOR A DAY

## *The right's vilification of black women is becoming a royal pain.*

**By Miles Harvey**



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### "Welfare Queen"

Crowned by: Ronald Reagan
Coronation quote: "There's a woman in Chicago. She has 80 names, 30 addresses, 12 Social Security cards and is collecting veterans' benefits on four nonexisting deceased husbands. And she's collecting Social Security on her cards. She's got Medicaid, getting food stamps and she is collecting welfare under each of her names. Her tax-free cash income alone is over $150,000."



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Lani Guinier, former nominee for assistant attorney general

### "Quota Queen"

Crowned by: *Wall Street Journal* contributor Clint Bolick
Coronation quote: "Ms. Guinier sets the standard for innovative radicalism. ... [Q]uotas are only the starting point. ... [S]he demands equal legislative outcomes, requiring abandonment not only of the 'one person, one vote' principle, but majority rule itself."
"Her confirmation would reignite the smoldering embers of racial division, while imperiling some of the very democratic institutions on which our nation's moral claim is staked."



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Surgeon General Joycelyn Elders

### "Condom Queen"

Crowned by: Traditional Values Coalition
Coronation quote: "Dr. Elders invisions [sic] public schools as cure-all, government-run, taxpayer-financed welfare centers for American children. ... [Elders' abortion policy] would wipe out most of the population. ... [Elders encourages] women to sell their health and security in the illegal act of selling their bodies ... in order to again break the law by purchasing drugs! ... Worse than the contempt in which she holds the public who oppose her radical goals is her plan to have that same public bankroll the advancement of those unhealthy programs."



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